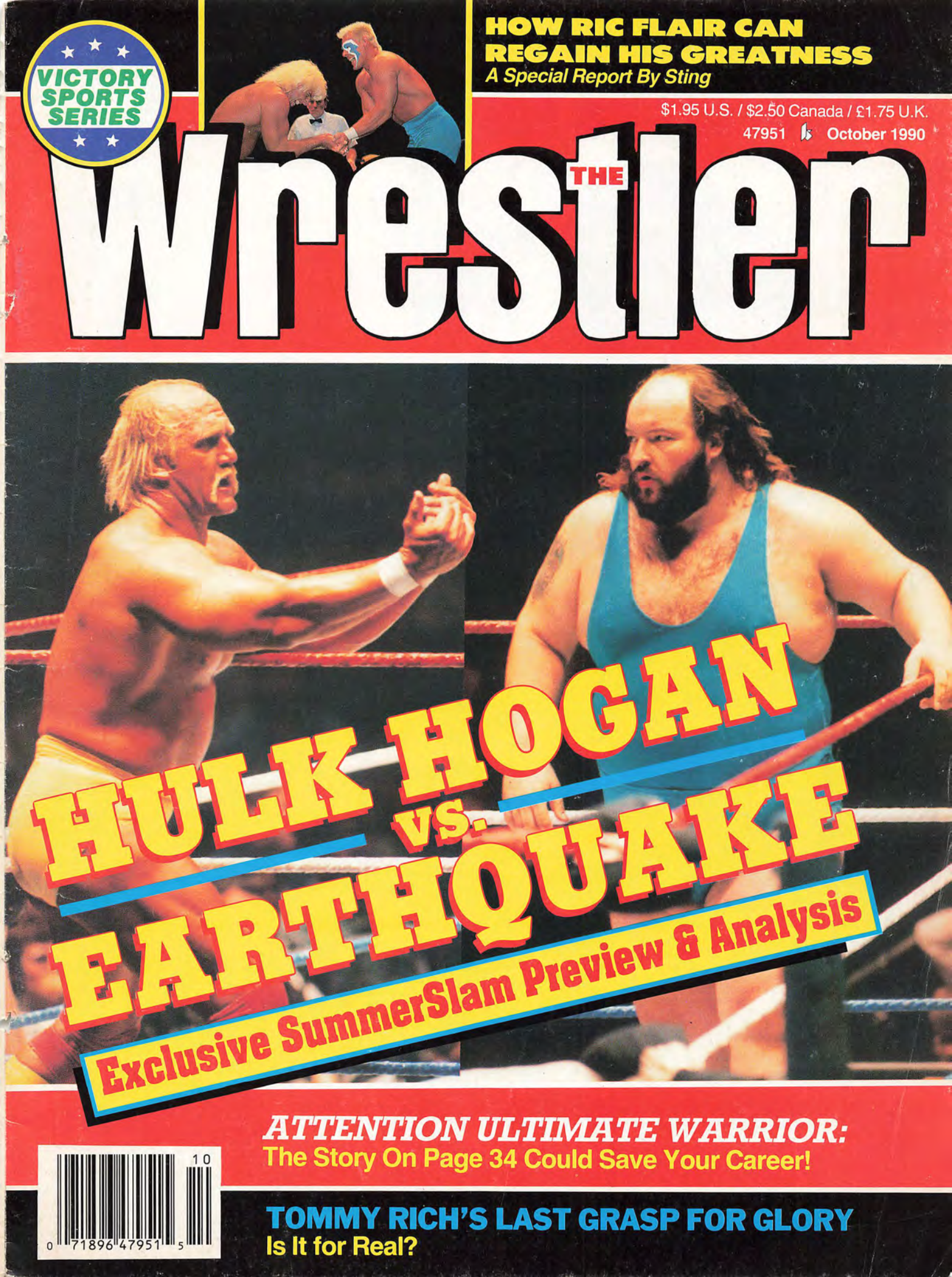
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THE Wrestler

CONTENTS/OCTOBER 1990

4 **YOUR LETTERS**
Ban The Quake; Zbyszko's A Zero; Bravo, Warrior

6 **WHAT'S HAPPENING**
All the latest news as of press time

8 **NO HOLDS BARRED by Dave Rosenbaum**
Ban Michael Hayes and Jim Garvin—now!

10 **BLINDSIDED by Bob Smith**
The Samoan Swat Team speaks out

12 **THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN**
Cheers and jeers to those who deserve them most

14 **CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS**
Eyewitness reports of the month's major matches

16 **YOU ASKED US**
All your most important questions are answered

18 **INTRODUCING THE TASMANIAN DEVIL**
This wild newcomer is burning up the independent ranks

20 **Q & A: CHRIS VON ERICH**
The youngest Von Erich tells all in this revealing interview

24 **SPOTLIGHT ON BILL DUNDEE**
A look at the Australian superstar's outstanding career

26 **X-RAY: BUDDY LANDELL**
Our panel of experts examines the *other* "Nature Boy"

29 **CURT HENNIG: MAKING THE WORLD PAY FOR HIS PAST IMPERFECTION**
He's taking out his frustrations on WWF contenders

32 **TOMMY RICH'S LAST GRASP FOR GLORY: IS IT FOR REAL?**
It's now or never for "Wildfire"

34 **ATTENTION ULTIMATE WARRIOR: THIS STORY COULD SAVE YOUR CAREER!**
The WWF champion shouldn't make the same mistakes others have

36 **HOW RIC FLAIR CAN REGAIN HIS GREATNESS— A SPECIAL REPORT BY STING**
Even the "Nature Boy's" sworn enemy thinks Flair can be saved

38 **HULK HOGAN VS. EARTHQUAKE: EXCLUSIVE SUMMERSLAM PREVIEW & ANALYSIS**
An in-depth look at the summer's biggest match

42 **BEYOND THE SQUARED CIRCLE**
Candid photos of your favorite stars

64 **OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS**
The sport's most respected rankings

66 **RATINGS ANALYSIS**
Ric Flair and Ultimate Warrior battle for number one

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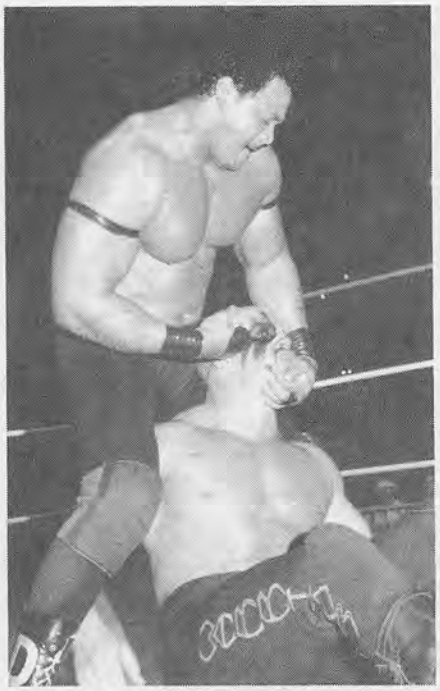


Doom did not drive The Road Warriors out of the NWA, in reader Vincent Benn's view.

WARRIORS DOOMED

Teddy Long was right and wrong when he said that the era of The Road Warriors is over ("Defiled By Doom: 'The Road Warrior Era Is Over!' " August 1990).

The Warriors' era is over in the NWA, but in the WWF it's just beginning. Long can claim all he wants that Doom drove Hawk and Animal out of the NWA, but the Warriors simply saw a better career opportunity and went for it.

The Legion of Doom should give Demolition one heck of a feud. Everybody has been waiting for them to get it on, and when they do it'll be great.

It'll make the Warrior-Doom feud look like a walk in the park.

VINCENT BENN
Detroit

TWO VIEWS ON HENNIG

It's beyond me why your magazine considers "Mr. Perfect" Curt Hennig a "bad guy" and continuously praises Hulk Hogan. Let me make the distinction between the two.

Hennig is an athlete and a *wrestler.* He has an arsenal of wrestling techniques, the most notable being his cradle-suplex, the "perfectplex." Hogan is a phony, rulebreaking, showboating brawler who only appeals to drippy-nosed little kids who don't know a thing about wrestling and only watch it because it's trendy.

Every time Hennig enters or exits the ring, the audience (especially the sniveling little brats) boos him. Maybe it's because they'd rather see no-talent brawlers like Hogan and Roddy Piper.

JOE SHERMAN
Randolph, MA

Curt Hennig's sleeper hasn't conquered Hulk Hogan, but reader Joe Sherman still calls Hennig a "perfect" champion.

Curt Hennig claims he's going to be the "perfect" Intercontinental champion, but he made a perfect mistake by hiring Bobby Heenan as his manager.

Hennig has shown he can successfully guide his own career and make his own decisions, even when he was AWA World champion. So why does he need a lying, cheating, backstabbing weasel like Heenan?

Curt, if my words don't convince you, just speak with Andre the Giant, Terry Taylor, or Hercules.

STEVEN RIFENBURGH
Leominster, MA

CONSPIRACY

I have followed wrestling since early 1984, and I have never seen such a complete mockery of the NWA World title than at "Capital Combat '90." I am beginning to believe there is an NWA conspiracy against Lex Luger.

When the cage was lifted during his match with Ric Flair, I knew the bout was over and Luger would once again be denied the title he so rightfully deserves. If the NWA really wanted a fair match, they would have guarded the controls to the cage much more carefully.

It is time for the NWA to demand a no-disqualification match between Flair and either Luger or Sting. Until this happens, The Four Horsemen will continue to interfere in matches and cause havoc in the NWA.

DAVE NELSON
Meridien, CT

HOGAN WON'T QUIT

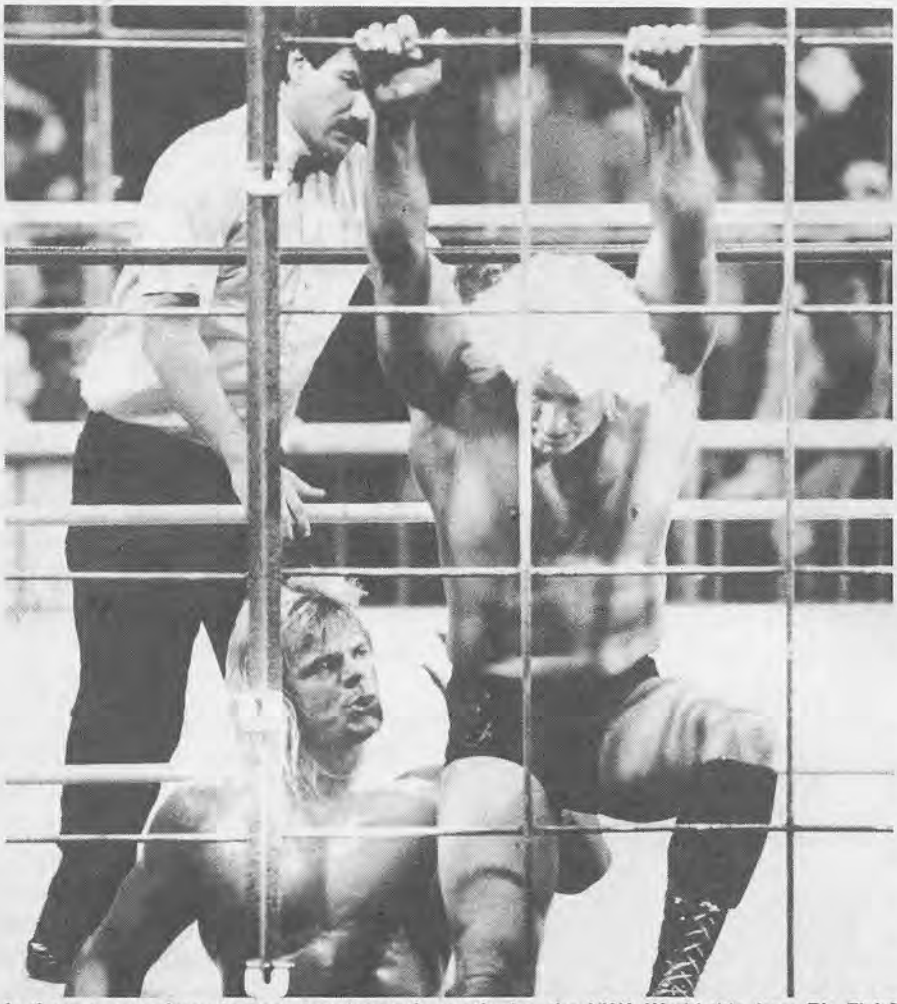
The Hulk Hogan-Ultimate Warrior match at WrestleMania VI was one of the best matches I've ever seen. A return bout is a *must.* Why wasn't the man who dominated the WWF for years granted an immediate rematch?

Hogan is no quitter. He will recover from the injuries he sustained at the hands of Earthquake and come back at 100 percent. He will get revenge on Earthquake and then push for a title shot at the Warrior.

This talk about Hogan retiring is pure garbage. He has always bounced back from adversity, and he still has several good years of wrestling left in him. It's hard for me to imagine wrestling without Hogan.

When Hulk finally does retire, it will be with a bang, not a whimper, and the World title belt will be around his waist.

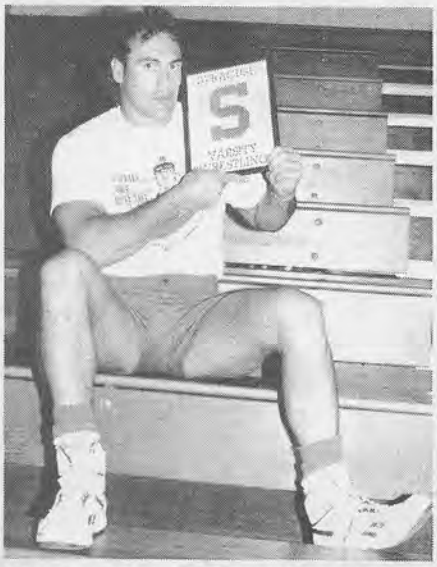
MIKE FACCIANI
Johnstown, PA



Is there a conspiracy to keep Lex Luger from winning the NWA World title from Ric Flair? Reader Dave Nelson does not discount the possibility.

NOW ROTUNDO'S RIGHT

When I read your story "Syracuse U. Forces Mike Rotundo To Turn Good: 'They Were Going To Take Away My Letter!' " (August 1990), it hit home. I did not attend Syracuse University, but I have a friend who did, and he was also embarrassed by Rotundo's rulebreaking actions.



Mike Rotundo won't lose his varsity letter, and that makes reader Mark Wilson happy.

We both are glad to see that Rotundo is wrestling on the side of good again. And if it took the threat of being stripped of his varsity letter to get Rotundo back on track, so be it.

MARK WILSON
Dover, NH

BAN THE QUAKE

Frankly, I'm disgusted with Earthquake. How can anyone condone the pure, barbaric sadism he demonstrated when he gave three of his "earthquake" splashes to Hulk Hogan during a Brother Love interview segment? He's already crippled men one-third his size, like Ronnie Garvin. I say "one-third his size" because I don't believe Earthquake is 468

(Continued on page 44)

WHAT'S HAPPENING!

By BILL APTER

Hawk and Animal are no longer known as The Road Warriors, but as The Legion of Doom they're sure to make a major impact on the WWF, where they debuted in June.

IT SEEMS CERTAIN that a feud between WWF World tag team champions **Demolition** and **The Legion of Doom** is imminent. **Hawk** and **Animal**, formerly known as **The Road Warriors**, made their WWF debut on June 25 at the Hara Arena in Dayton, Ohio, destroying the team of **Tom Stone** and **Black Bart** with ease.

The biggest news, however, occurred after the match. Hawk and Animal appeared on a **Brother Love** interview segment and stated that they are the original power team in the sport, and claimed that **Ax** and **Smash**—and now the newest Demolition member, **Crush**—are "imposters" who copied the original Road Warrior style.

"The LOD is roaring mad, and it won't be long before they take their frustrations out on Demolition," said a WWF preliminary wrestler who was in the locker room as the Legion prepared for their debut match. "As they suited up, they were complaining that Demolition had ripped them off, that they had copied their looks, their mannerisms, and even their

(Continued on page 48)

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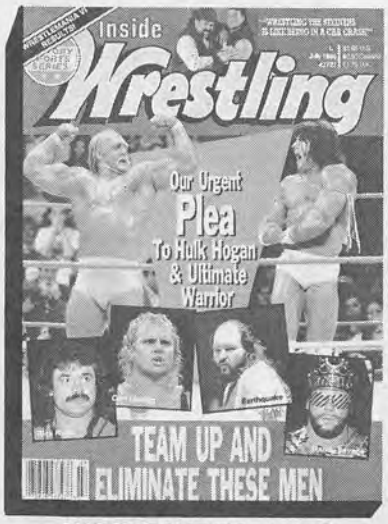

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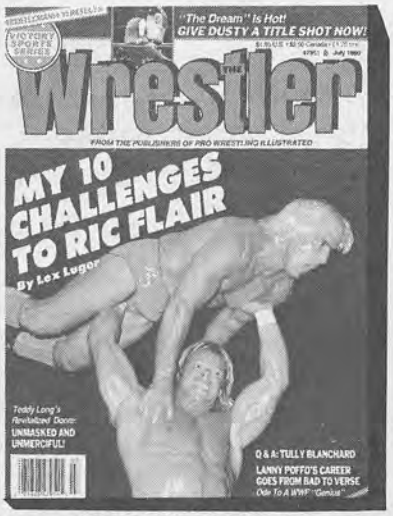

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NO HOLDS BARRED

with David Rosenbaum

Jimmy Garvin and Michael Hayes—The Freebirds—should be banned from the sport, in Dave Rosenbaum's opinion.

BAN THE FREEBIRDS! That's right, Jimmy Garvin and Michael Hayes should be banned, not just from the NWA, but from all of wrestling. They should never again be allowed in the ring or near a television camera.

Their crime, the most heinous of all, is being obnoxious.

They overstrut.

They overtalk.

They over*everything* . . . except wrestle.

"Garvin and Hayes are always trying to make everything look flashy," Scott Steiner said. "Those guys don't have much in the way of moves, so they try to package 'em well. They don't fool me, and they don't fool anybody with a brain. And they *certainly* can't fool the referee into counting one-two-three when me and Rick are in the ring with them!"

Certainly can't. But if there's one thing that's always bothered me about the 'Birds, it's their message that hard partying and hard rocking is the only way to live.

There's nothing wrong with wanting to have fun, and there's nothing wrong with going out and *having* fun. It's just that The Freebirds seem to want to do little else. And, judging by their ring performance, it's taking away from their training time.

"Always gotta have time to party with the boys!" Michael Hayes shouted into my ear.

"It's The Freebirds' way of life!" Jimmy Garvin explained.

But that way of life is fast becoming extinct, and the implied message of "hard partying" seems to mean courting disaster.

That doesn't wash anymore, fellas.

"Hey, look, we always claim that *everybody* ought to be re-

(Continued on page 50)

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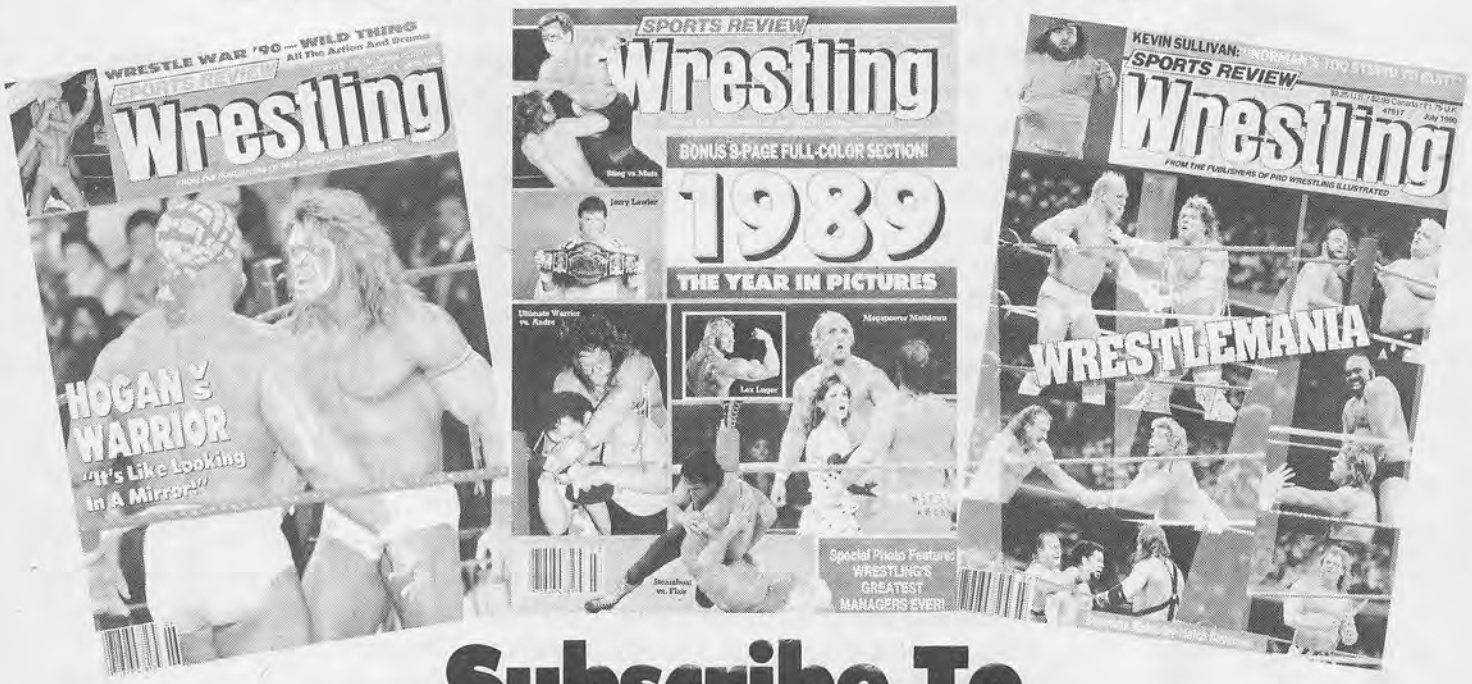

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BLINDSIDED

BY BOB SMITH

CONTRARY TO POPULAR opinion, the manic Samoan Swat Team *can* speak English. Only a couple of months ago, Fatu and The Samoan Savage stunned many fans by actually delivering a coherent interview during an NWA TV broadcast!

"I can't believe people really think we can't speak," said Samoan Savage. "Hey, I'm an accomplished actor. Didn't people see me in *Body Slam* ? Don't they know I'm one of the most intelligent guys around?"

"I never thought I'd make such a big splash by *talking*," said an amazed Fatu. "It must be because our mentors, Afa and Sika, don't speak very often. Or it could be because we've had a manager for such a long time that most people assumed we couldn't speak English, or only Samoan at best. Now we're speaking out for ourselves—and we're doing everything else for ourselves, too."

That might be the understatement of the year. The SST has gone through so many changes in the past 18 months that it's been nearly impossible to keep a handle on what they're up to.

The Samoan Swat Team vs. Mike Rotundo

Late in 1988, the SST consisted of Fatu and Samu, and they became three-time World Class tag team champions under the management of Buddy Roberts. A few months later, they entered the NWA under the management of Paul E. Dangerously. Visions of the World tag team title danced in their braid-bedecked heads—for a while, anyway.

"Let me set the record straight on something," said Fatu sternly. "Dangerously never did this team any good at all. Instead of having us contend for the World title—which was then held by teams like The Freebirds—all Dangerously was concerned about was feuding with The Road Warriors. Samu and I didn't care about garbage like that. We wanted to win the big prize, so we dumped Paul E. like a bad habit, brother."

Last October, the SST reemerged on the scene, with Savage replacing Samu. They made an excellent showing at Starrcade '89 as a last-minute substitute for The Skyscrapers. Aided by the managerial acumen of Sir Oliver Humperdink, the Samoans scored 35 points in the "Iron Team" competition, losing out to the Warriors by just five points. It looked like the Samoans were on the right track. But after only a few months, they dumped Humperdink as well.

"Humper is a fine manager and a good man, but things quickly bogged down the same way they did with Dangerously," said Savage. "We weren't getting any closer to our goals than we did with Paul, so we bid farewell to Oliver. It was only after we started wrestling on our own that things really started clicking for us."

By this past spring, the SST had worked their way back into title contention. Aided greatly by the Savage's incredible flying bodypress, the Samoans started looking more like the team that dominated World Class less than two years ago. By April, they started getting shots at the World tag team title, which at the time was held by Rick and Scott Steiner.

According to Fatu, all it took was looking out for themselves.

"We're making our *own* rules now," he said proudly. "I don't think you'll ever see us with a manager again. Those guys tend to work on their own schemes rather than do what's best for their wrestlers. We've done more on our own than we've ever done with Roberts, Dangerously, or Humperdink. And when we win those World titles, we'll have no one to thank but ourselves."

For more than two years, the SST never said a word. If and when they finally *do* win those belts, it might take an army to shut them up!□

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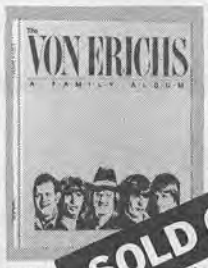

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Thumbs Up

Each issue, *The Wrestler* will praise the noteworthy and damn those who violate the honor of wrestling. The praiseworthy receive a Thumbs Up, the disgraceful are marked with a Thumbs Down. Here is this month's roll of honor and shame.

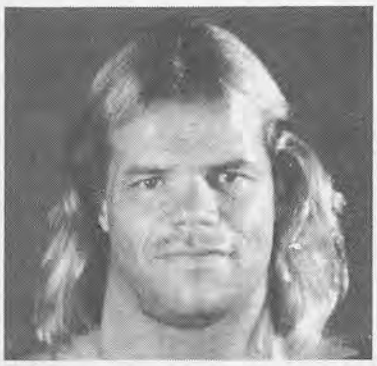
Thumbs Up to Toni Adams. What a brave (and beautiful!) woman. Toni Adams is the kind of woman everyone can look up to. She doesn't depend on her husband to fight her battles. She simply gets into the ring and fights them by herself. Her latest target is Jeannie, Chris Adams' ex-wife, who is constantly sticking her nose in Chris' matches and Toni's business. Toni knows Chris doesn't want to get involved in a nasty fight with his ex-wife, and she's doing what she feels is necessary to help her husband.

Thumbs Up to Larry Zbyszko. To Larry Zbyszko? Are we kidding? No, we're afraid we're not. Of course, we're not honoring the AWA World champion because of his insidious ring style or his belligerent interview attitude. But he does deserve to be recognized for the fact that he just spent two weeks in Hawaii and Guam defending his belt against Don Muraco and Sgt. Slaughter. A big "thumbs down" to Zbyszko for his disgusting ring tactics, but at least he's conscientious enough to recognize the fact that he is, after all, a *world* champion.

Thumbs Up to The Ultimate Warrior. The WWF World heavyweight champion is a champion fans can be proud of. And his recent hot streak (is "hot" a strong enough word for a man who *never* loses?) has been simply incredible. We're not saying people should forget former World champion Hulk Hogan, but the Warrior should be measured by his own set of standards. Comparisons to Hogan are no longer necessary. It's obvious that the Warrior will hold the title for a long time.

Thumbs Up to Paul Orndorff. "Mr. Wonderful" is oh-so-wonderful once again! And his recent membership into the Dudes With Attitudes proves that Orndorff still has a lot to give to the wrestling world. Orndorff disappeared from the scene for a long time, but it's obvious that he didn't waste his time. The new Orndorff is more dangerous than ever, and, just as importantly, he's a man others can respect. How long will it last? When will Orndorff return to his old ways? Those are not questions we should worry about. Watch the new Orndorff and enjoy!

Thumbs Down



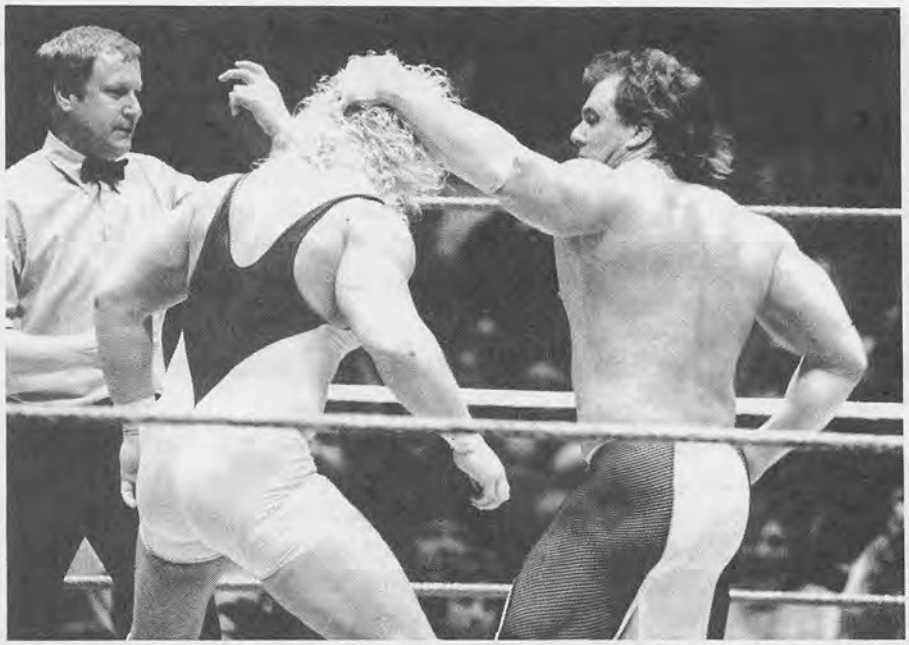
Thumbs Down to Lex Luger. The U.S. champion is acting like a big crybaby. "Wah! I want all the title shots to myself! Wah! The NWA is giving my toys away! Wah! Wah!" Wipe your nose, dry your tears, and face up to your situation like a man! You've had more than enough shots at the World title. Junkyard Dog performed admirably against Ric Flair and deserved his matches. Brian Pillman and Rick Steiner deserved their title matches as well. At press time, Sting's return was imminent, and he's certain to get many title bouts. You'll get more, too—eventually. Deal with it, Lex. Act like the champion you are.

Thumbs Down to Percy Pringle. Bad guy, good guy, bad guy. Well, that's how Pringle's career has gone. And, we must say, he fits the bad guy role very well. Pringle is, quite simply, an evil man. Kerry Von Erich's only crime was allowing the evil in Pringle to come out. It was only a matter of time. Now, naturally, Pringle finds it necessary to interfere in Kerry's matches. And when Kerry regained the USWA Texas title from Matt Borne, Pringle was there to ruin the moment. Well, you failed again, Percy. Kerry's raging glory could not be extinguished!

Thumbs Down to Jack Tunney. Does the WWF president know what is going on in his own federation? Does he care? Or is he trying to make a mockery of this once-great federation? The recent announcement that any two of the three members of Demolition—Ax, Smash, and Crush—can defend the WWF World tag team title was ridiculous and unreasonable. And, quite obviously, it is an attempt by the WWF to ensure that The Legion of Doom *never* wins the belts. Why is the WWF anti-Road Warrior? Because the WWF doesn't want this great NWA team to conquer the WWF. The logic is simple, the crime is obvious. Tunney is the guilty party.

Thumbs Down to Sting. We like the idea of Dudes With Attitudes, a group designed to combat The Four Horsemen by giving them a taste of their own medicine. But recently we've seen Sting interfering in match after match, allowing fellow Dude Junkyard Dog to score a "victory" over Arn Anderson, for example. Fighting four-on-one attacks by evening the sides is one thing. Sinking down to the same level as the Horsemen is quite another, and it hardly befits a man of Sting's class and character. □

CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS



"Mr. Perfect" Curt Hennig has defended his Intercontinental title against Brutus Beefcake at dozens of venues and so far has always managed to escape with the belt.

Ft. Myers, FL ***(Correspondent—Donna Hubbard):*** In the main event of a WWF card here, Intercontinental champion Curt Hennig faced the challenge of Brutus "The Barber" Beefcake.

Beefcake's determination to win the title was apparent at the outset as he took control of the match from the moment he entered the ring. The action often spilled out of the ring, and for a while it looked as though there'd be a double-countout. At one point, Hennig tried to put Beefcake in a Boston crab, but Brutus slipped out of the hold.

Finally, Beefcake won the match by countout. When Hennig climbed back in the ring after the decision, he got tied up in the ropes. Beefcake was about to cut Hennig's hair when the referee untangled him from the ropes, allowing him to escape to the dressing room.

In other bouts: The Barbarian pinned Jim Powers . . . Sapphire defeated Sensational Sherri . . . Randy Savage pinned Jimmy Snuka . . . The Bushwhackers defeated The Honky Tonk Man & Greg Valentine by disqualification . . . Tugboat pinned Jerry Sags . . . Al Perez defeated Paul Diamond.

Atlanta, GA ***(Correspondent—Ronald Easton):*** For this NWA main event pitting Ric Flair and Barry Windham against Junkyard Dog and Lex Luger in The Omni, there were two referees: Nick Patrick and Mr. Wrestling II. In addition, The Four Horsemen had Ole Anderson in their corner, while Luger and JYD had Thunderbolt Patterson in theirs.

Mr. Wrestling II returned to the NWA to referee a match involving The Four Horsemen.

Patrick and II alternated duty in and out of the ring, changing spots approximately every three minutes. About 12 minutes into the contest, Patrick (who was the legal ref in the ring at the time)

(Continued on page 52)

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Q: "My question is for Arn Anderson: Why did you split from Tully Blanchard? The Brain Busters were the greatest tag team ever!"—Michael Doherty, Cork, Ireland

A: **"We never really split up, Doherty," said Anderson, the current NWA TV champion. "If you remember, Tully and I were a couple of pretty unhappy campers when we left the WWF. We had just lost the tag team title to Demolition, and then Bobby Heenan went on national television and called us all sorts of names. We weren't going to put up with that garbage, so I decided to go back to the NWA and help my main man Ric Flair reform The Four Horsemen. Tully decided he wanted to get back to basics, so he got back together with his old manager, Christopher Love, in the AWA. That's fine by me. Tully's still one of my closest friends, and I know that someday, somehow, we'll be a unit again. That's about as much as I'm going to say about that. Right now, my main concern is keeping the Horsemen the elite group in wrestling."**

Arn Anderson says he and Tully Blanchard no longer team simply because they've chosen different career paths, not because they had a falling-out.

***

Q: "I have a question for Senior Editor Bill Apter: Now that Curt Hennig is the Intercontinental champion—and now that Bobby Heenan is his new manager—do you think he'll have a long title reign? And do you think he will be an honorable champion?"—Tony Gomeya, Columbia, SC

When he was AWA World champion, Curt Hennig cheated (here against Jeff Jarrett) to hold on to his title, and he employs the same tactics in defending his WWF Intercontinental title.

A: **"Hennig is one of the finest competitors in the sport today," replied Apter. "He has all the tools: strength, speed, intelligence, and he knows as many holds and maneuvers as anyone. I wouldn't discount a lengthy I-C title reign, and he could become the longest reigning champion ever. But as far as being an honorable titleholder, I don't think there's much of a chance of that happening. During his tenure as AWA World champion, all Hennig did was cheat. And now that he's got Heenan as his manager, he'll likely be twice as bad as he used to be."**

***

Q: "I have some questions for the true giant of wrestling, El Gigante: How would you compare yourself to Andre the Giant? Do you think

(Continued on page 54)

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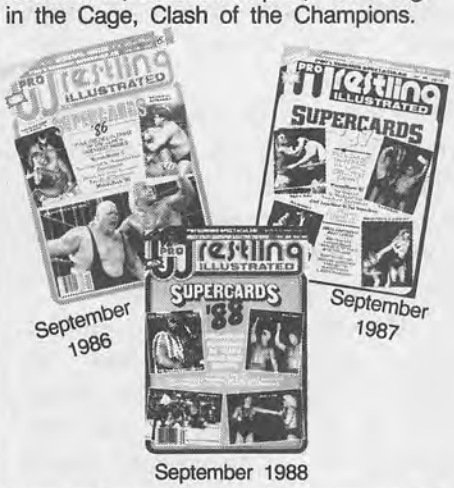

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INTRODUCING THE TASMANIAN DEVIL

AS A YOUNGSTER growing up in Queens, New York, The Tasmanian Devil constantly got into fights. He says he couldn't help it.

"I was a tough little kid with a chip on my shoulder," he recalls. "Even if a guy was twice my size, I didn't care. I always felt like I had to prove myself."

That urge to fight soon translated into an urge to wrestle.

"I saw all the great wrestlers on TV and I knew that was what I wanted to do," Devil says. "I couldn't believe guys got paid good money to beat each other up."

At the age of 17, Devil—who prefers to keep his real name to himself—entered the wrestling school run by veteran grappler Johnny Rodz, who quickly saw the potential in his student.

"The kid had loads of athletic talent and a fighting heart to match," Rodz said. "Still does. And at a solid 5'11" and 245 pounds, he's a package of power and energy. But he always wanted to learn too much too soon. He picked up on moves and holds a lot quicker than the other students, so that made him impatient. I tried to make him slow down, but he wouldn't listen."

At first, The Tasmanian Devil received traditional schooling in wrestling, but then he was sent to Tasmania for more specialized training.

After about a year, Rodz decided Devil needed special training. "I'd done all I could for him," Rodz says, "and I knew a fellow in Tasmania who'd be perfect for the kid."

Devil didn't hesitate for a moment. "When Johnny asked me if

(Continued on page 56)

Growing up on the streets of New York, The Tasmanian Devil always dreamed of making it big in the squared circle. But only after years of training here and in Tasmania did he become equipped with the tools for success. Now he's determined to make his dreams a reality

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Revenge was the theme of the 1989 Bash as NWA champ Ric Flair came back from a broken neck to wrestle former champ Terry Funk, and U.S. champ Lex Luger battled Rick Steamboat. Also: Sting vs. Muta; War Games; a battle of wits turns to a battle of fists as Paul E. Dangerously rumbles with Jim Cornette; plus much more.

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Wild Thing

Lex Luger could have won the NWA World title from Ric Flair, but saving Sting from a crippling attack from the Andersons took priority! On this night, Luger showed the fans just what's inside the "Total Package." Also: Steiners vs. Andersons, Road Warriors vs. Skyscrapers, more.

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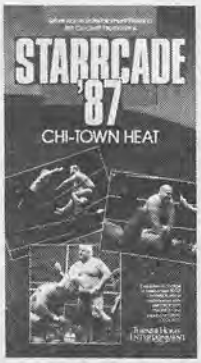

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The Sky-Walkers

So big it had to be held in two locations—The Omni in Atlanta and the Greensboro Coliseum in North Carolina. Highlights include: NWA champ Ric Flair vs. Nikita Koloff; Road Warriors vs. Midnights on a scaffold; "First Blood" match—Rhodes vs. Blanchard; Ron Garvin vs. Big (Bossman) Bubba; Rock 'n' Rolls vs. Andersons in cage; Jones vs. Valiant—hair vs. hair.

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The sixth annual Starrcade event, the first under the Ted Turner banner, thrilled a sellout crowd at The Scope in Virginia. Featured: Lex Luger's challenge of Ric Flair; Road Warriors vs. Sting & Rhodes; Windham vs. Bigelow; Rotundo vs. Rick Steiner; Midnights vs. Midnights; and more.

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Q&A

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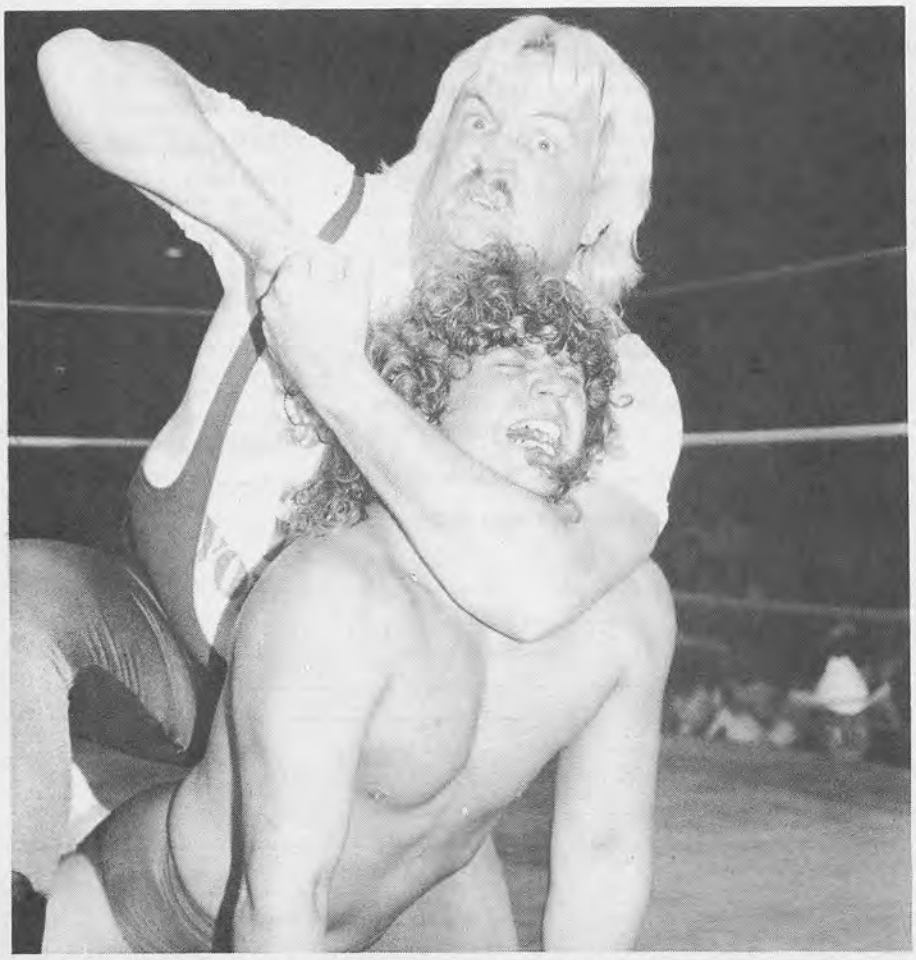


Percy Pringle has been a constant troublemaker for the Von Erich family, so Chris Von Erich couldn't wait to get in the ring against him and prove himself as a competitor.

Q: Chris, congratulations on your very impressive debut. It looks like you'll be the answer to a trivia question from now on.

A: Really? What question is that? Let me guess—who was the fifth Von Erich brother to wrestle?

Q: That's true, but I had something else in mind. When Mike [Von Erich] had his first match at the Sportatorium in 1984, he made his wrestling debut against a manager, Gen. Skandor Akbar. Now you've had your first match against a manager as well.

A: That's pretty interesting. Hey, if I turn out to be half the wrestler that any of my brothers have been, then I'll be a very proud young man. But I think that it's important to keep my ring debut in a proper perspective.

Q: What do you mean?

A: Well, when I made the challenge to Percy, I didn't do it because I had some grandiose ideas about rocketing to the top of the USWA ratings or anything like that. I did it to prove a point. Both Percy and Matt turned against Kerry and Kevin, and one of the ways they got their point across was by attacking me. Once again, I felt like I had gotten in my brothers' way, you know? It seems like whenever I get near a ring, trouble starts—and I couldn't do anything to help out, which *really* makes me upset.

CHRIS VON ERICH

THERE WERE MANY who believed it was never going to happen. After almost five years of constant training, it looked as if Chris Von Erich, the youngest member of the Von Erich family, would never wrestle professionally. He was too small, people said. Others claimed that he just didn't have the fighting heart that his famous brothers possessed.

Even 20-year-old Chris was starting to believe that he would never compete. But this past spring, Chris was attacked by "Maniac" Matt Borne during an interview. When Chris' older brother, Kerry, ran out from the dressing room to rescue him, the siblings made a resolve: To gain revenge on Borne at any and all costs.

Borne joined forces with his new manager, the devious Percy Pringle, as he and Kerry traded the Texas title back and forth. But Chris wanted to do something to help, so he mustered up all his courage and challenged the rotund Pringle to a match on June 22 at Dallas' Sportatorium.

It appears that the long years of struggle have paid off. Chris easily dispatched Pringle, showing the same kind of wrestling skills that made his family famous. Chris is now vowing to help Kevin and Kerry whenever and wherever he can.

Associate Editor Bob Smith was in Dallas to speak with Chris following his debut victory.

Q: The fans were upset when Borne blindsided you. He just lifted you up and rammed you head-first into the ring apron as hard as he could. It really looked like you might've been hurt very badly.

A: Yeah, I had a pretty bad headache for about five days. But what felt worse was that everybody was running around saying, "Poor little Chris Von Erich." *Little* Chris. People around here have always treated me like I'm 10 years old or something. Hey, I'm a man. I'm 20 years old now, and I figured it was time to stand up for myself.

Q: And that's why you challenged Percy?

A: Exactly. Granted, I couldn't really do much against Borne. He's about twice my size, and if I ever wrestled him he probably *would* tear my head off. So if I couldn't get my revenge on Matt, the next best thing would be to polish off his shady manager. So that's what I did, and believe me, I feel really good about it. It was so nice to finally get up in the ring and show the world that while I may not be the biggest guy in the world, at least I can hold my own with a lying sack of manure like Pringle. I'll tell you, when I hit him in the belly, it was just like sticking my hands in my mama's sourdough bread before she sticks it in the oven. What a slob!

Q: So this makes your record 1-0 as a pro. What are your future plans as far as getting in the ring goes?

A: I really don't know at this point. After I beat him, Pringle kept going around saying that my pinfall was a fluke, that he could beat me if I wrestled him again. I might just do that. Hey, it's fun putting some knots in his fat head, so if he's dumb enough to want to make a hobby out of it, then it's fine with me.

Q: But how about wrestling against other *wrestlers* ?

A: *(pauses)* That's a question that I'll really have to put a lot of thought into. Kevin and Kerry have been everything I could ever ask for and more during my training. For years, they've taken time out of their busy schedules to work out

Chris took tremendous pleasure in beating Pringle, but is not sure what his next move will be. He does say that if Pringle wants another match, he would oblige.

with me in the gym, and they showed me holds, maneuvers, and all the training techniques you could shake a stick at. Right now, I'd bet that I know more about wrestling than half of the active competitors out there. But, well, I'm . . . gee, how do I put this?

Q: Don't be ashamed, Chris. It's obvious to everyone that you're a bit on the small side.

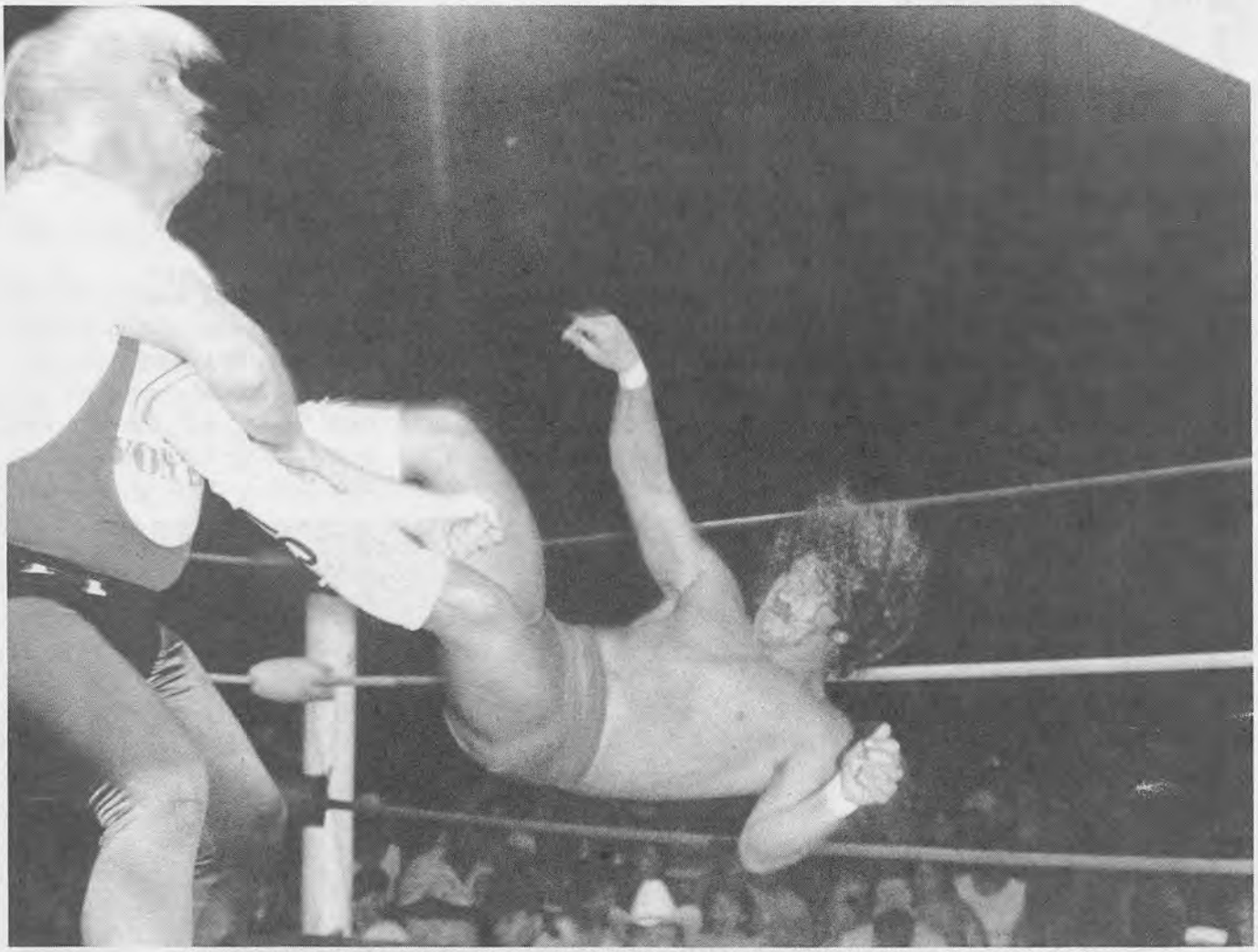
A: *(sheepishly)* **There, you said it for me. That's right. I *am* small. After working out for years, I've managed to build my body up to about 200 pounds. But I still can't change the fact that I'm barely 5'7". There's nothing I can do about that. So, unless the USWA decides to sanction a light heavyweight division, there's no way I could compete against some of the bruisers that are around here. Could you imagine me against Jeff Gaylord? Or Mike Awesome? I'd get my head handed to me on a plate!**

Q: That's probably true. But not every wrestler is a giant, however. Look at Bill Dundee. He's only 5'7", but he's held the USWA Southwestern belt twice, and that's only one of the many titles he's won.

A: **Yeah, I know that. Dundee is a role model for any of us who've been told that we're too small to be athletes. I've talked with Jeff Jarrett about that, too. But right now, I think it's important to pick and choose my spots. Am I going to become a full-time professional wrestler? I think the answer to that question is no. Will I ever wrestle again? The answer to *that* question, though, is an emphatic yes. I think there will be plenty of opportunities to help my brothers in the future. Maybe I can give an assist in six-man tag team matches. Or maybe they'll just need somebody to hang out at ringside to look out for Pringle or Akbar. Whenever I'm needed, you can bet I'll be there.**

Q: It looks as if Kerry and Kevin will no doubt need your help. On the same card in which you made your debut, Kevin wrestled Borne and defeated him by disqualification. But after the match, Gary Young ran out and cut Kevin's hair with scissors that were handed to him by Terrance Garvin.

A: **You see the problem here? All the time, people gang up on each other in the USWA. That's the influence of that rat Akbar. As long as he's around as a manager, wrestlers are going to try to break the rules—particularly where my brothers are**



Chris says he wouldn't mind wrestling another USWA manager, Gen. Skandor Akbar. Chris' brother Mike made his pro debut against Akbar in 1984.

concerned. Now, Kevin looks terrible because Young hacked off his hair. Well, the biggest thing my daddy always taught me is that I should always look out for my brothers. I just wish I could've been there at that point. I think I'm *more* than man enough to take care of a prancing screamer like Garvin!

Q: You've brought up an interesting idea. Since you've been so successful against Pringle, how about taking on the USWA's other rule-breaking manager? After watching you in action against Percy, you might just have a shot at defeating Akbar.

A: That's an intriguing thought. We could even put some special stipulations on the bout. We could make it loser leaves the USWA. Hey, if I lose, then I probably don't deserve to be a pro wrestler anyway. But if I won, I'd be the biggest USWA hero since Eric Embry last year. *(laughs)* Who knows? Maybe we can sign a match like that real soon. I doubt that coward Akbar would go for it, though.

Q: Things are certainly starting to look up for the Von Erichs. Kerry is riding high as the Texas champion, Kevin is starting to get into the action full-time again, and you've made your successful debut. What do you hope to see happen in the future?

A: For myself, I just want to remain healthy and happy. But I want nothing but the best for my brothers. Kerry seems very happy with the Texas belt, so I hope he can hold that for as long as he wants. Kevin has designs on the USWA title, for sure. What I'd like to see is for *both* of them to be champions. That would make me very proud.

Q: I've talked to both Kevin and Kerry since your debut victory, and they both say they're very proud of *you.*

A: I don't think I could ever ask for more. □

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BILL DUNDEE

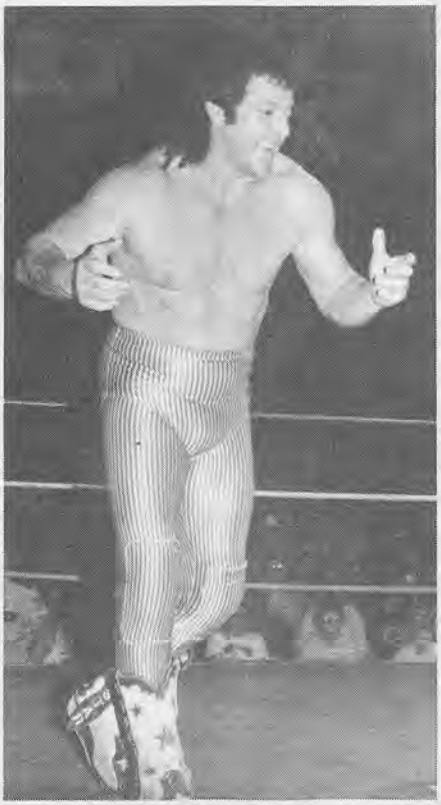
"SUPERSTAR" BILL DUNDEE is a 16-year veteran of the sport who has been through dozens of feuds and wrestled thousands of matches, and he has always been a winner. Yet, before each match, as he looks way up into the eyes of his opponent, he looks like a man who would be a lot better off seated in the front row.

"My opponents always say I'm too small to pose any kind of a threat, but I always prove them wrong," said the 5'7", 214-pound Melbourne, Australia, native. And when I do, there isn't any better feeling in the world."

Dundee, who has been battling John Tatum for the USWA Southwestern title recently, maintains that he's at the peak of his glorious career. In recent months, he and Tatum have traded the belt back and forth several times. Dundee scored a major psychological victory in the feud when he won the favor of Tessa, the woman who was once Tatum's valet but now accompanies Dundee to ringside.

"Tessa wised up," Dundee says. "She got sick of the way Tatum was treating her. When she saw what a real man like me could do for her, she came over to my side. He'll be lucky if she ever sets eyes on him again."

Although Tatum has been his chief opponent in 1990, Dundee is perhaps best known for his classic feud with Jerry Lawler. Ironically, Lawler has also been one of Dundee's closest allies in the sport.



Bill Dundee's confident strut is an indication of how his career is going. Dundee is one of the USWA's most popular stars.

"Yep, you could say me and Jerry have had a topsy-turvy relationship," Dundee admits. "There were times I wanted to tear his head off, but he's also pulled my hide out of the fire on more occasions than I care to count. I can never predict from one day to the next if Jerry and I will see eye-to-eye."

For his part, Lawler sees Dundee as a constant threat.

"Whether we're friends or not isn't necessarily the point," Lawler says. "Dundee is a fine wrestler. Whenever I have that USWA title, I know that Dundee will want a title match immediately. Bill and I know each other almost ***too*** *well."*

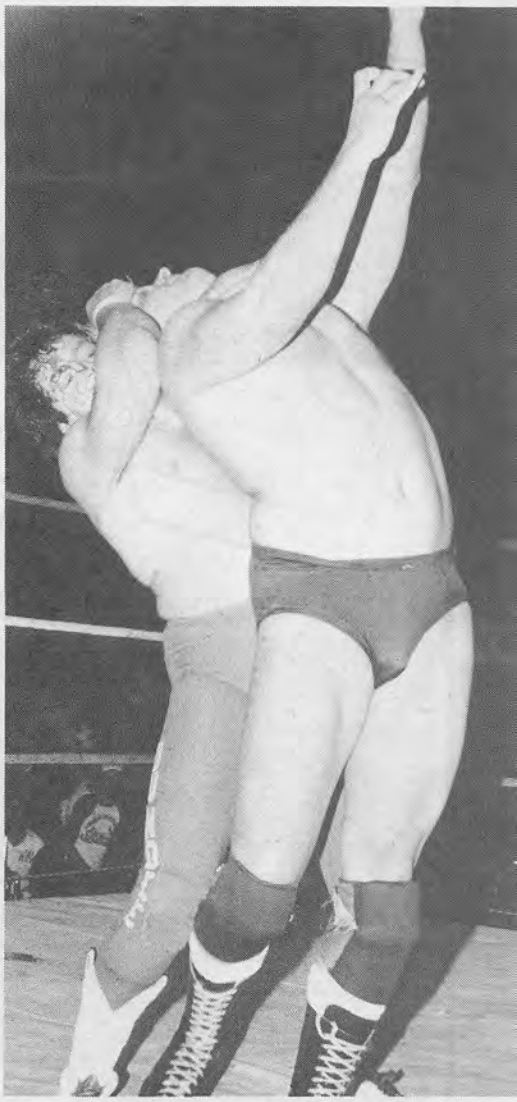
There are many other interesting aspects of the "Superstar's" career. In 1982, he defeated Koko B. Ware in the sport's first-ever scaffold match. Dundee challenged Ware to the unusual encounter because their feud was getting out of hand as the result of the constant interference of Ware's manager, Jimmy Hart.

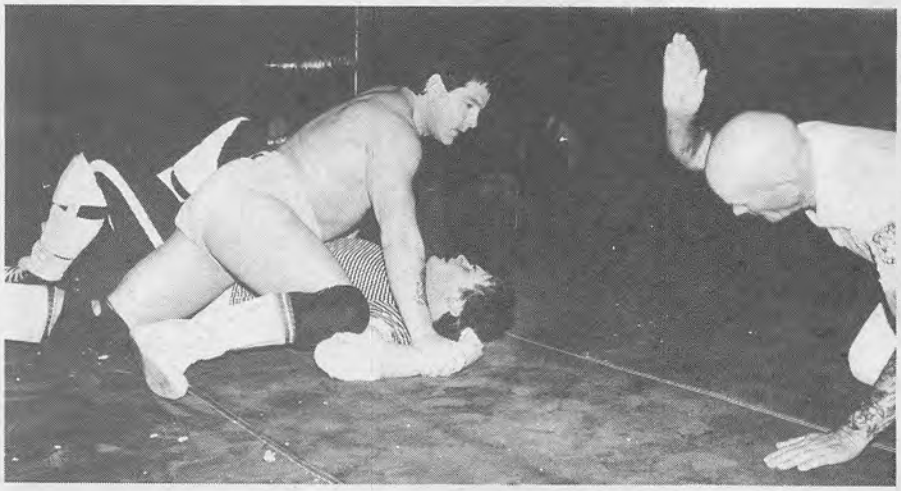
"I figured the only way to keep Hart from interfering was by going up on a scaffold," Dundee recalls. "I knew Hart would be too much of a coward to climb all the way up there."

Dundee always knows where his advantage lies. If it's not 15 feet above the mat on a scaffold, it's with his mouth. "He's one of the great talkers, and he knows how to get under the skin of his opponents," says NWA broadcaster Lance Russell, who interviewed Dundee hundreds of times when he was an announcer in Memphis. "If I didn't do anything to stop him, Billy would just keep on talking and talking. But I assure you that, unlike many wrestlers, Bill could back it up in the ring."

As Dundee continues his battles with Tatum, ***The Wrestler*** *aims its "Spotlight" at some of the most memorable moments in his career.*

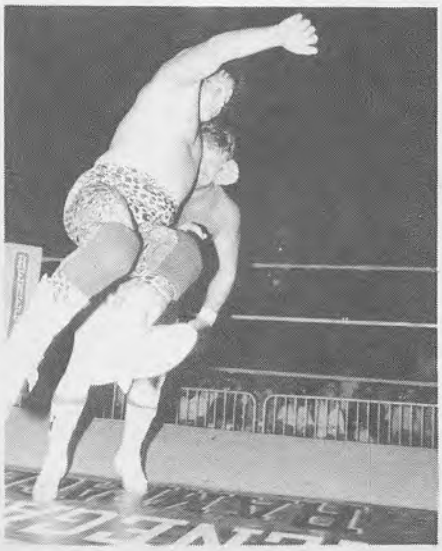
November 1979: Early in his career, Dundee wrestled Nick Bockwinkel for the AWA World title (above left). June 1982: Dundee defeated Koko B. Ware in the sport's first-ever scaffold match (above right).

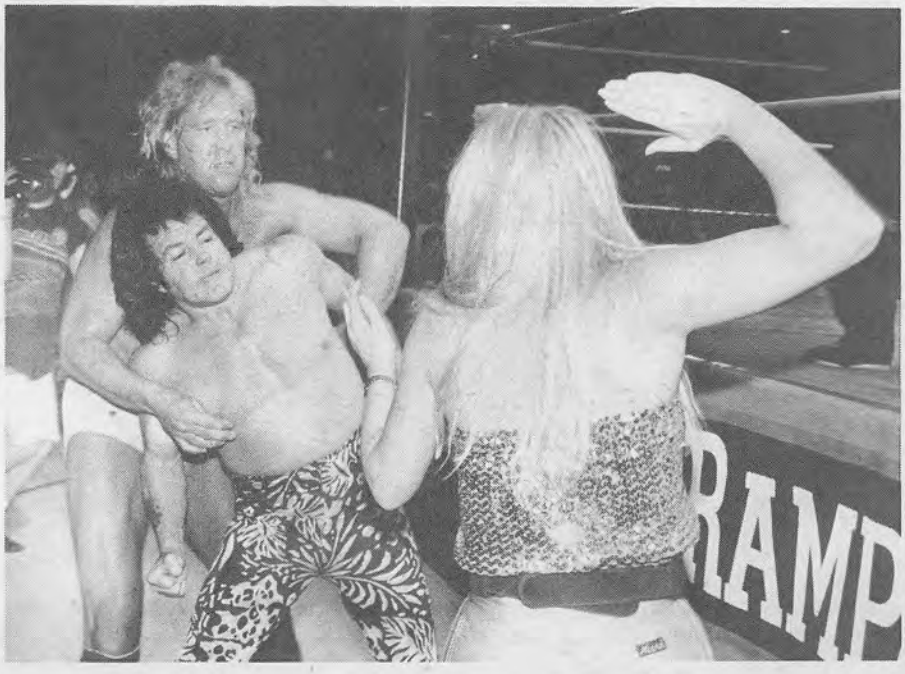




October 1983: Dundee took on both Jim Cornette and Jimmy Hart (not pictured) in this handicap match (left). May 1986: Buddy Landell is victimized by a Dundee sleeper (above).

June 1988: Dundee and Jerry Lawler have been feuding on and off for years (below). May 1990: Tatum holds Dundee for Tessa's slap (right); now Tessa's with Dundee.





THE WRESTLER PANEL EXAMINES

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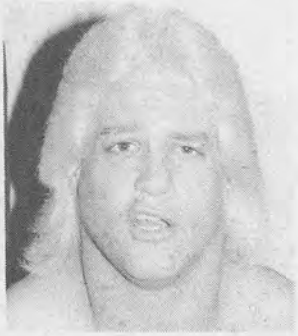


BUDDY LANDELL

Each month THE WRESTLER'S panel of experts will offer their candid opinions of one of wrestling's stars. Whether an up-and- coming youngster or an established superstar in his own right, our panel will always be frank and honest without fear of reprisal

"Nature Boy" Buddy Landell (chinlocking Nikita Koloff) is a fine scientific wrestler, but he prefers to brawl most of the time. Landell's major problem has been his inability to establish himself in one federation.

CAPT. LOU ALBANO

"I remember a hungry young wrestler by the name of Buddy Landell who made his debut 10 years ago. I never saw a young guy with so much drive and spirit. Back in those days, I was a rulebreaking manager, and I admired the way that Buddy would tear into his opponents without any regard for the rules or regulations. I've changed, but I can see that Landell is still the same man. He's got a sadistic streak a mile wide, and I just can't condone that, daddy."

Capt. Lou Albano, long known as "The Guiding Light," has guided 13 tag teams to an unmatched 16 WWF World tag team titles.

KILLER KOWALSKI

"As everybody knows, there are two 'Nature Boys' in this sport. The more famous one, naturally, is Ric Flair. But nobody should ignore Buddy Landell, because he's still an up-and-coming star in this sport. What's interesting to me right now is that both of these guys are competing in the NWA. What will happen if their paths cross? Raw violence, my friend. It happened once before, and you can bet it'll happen again. Things could get *real* hot."

Killer Kowalski, one of the most sadistic rulebreakers in the sport's history, runs a wrestling school in Reading, Massachussetts.

PROF. TORU TANAKA

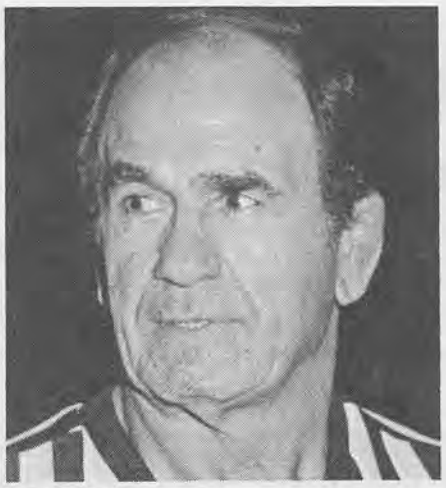
"I don't care much for Landell. He is your typical American wrestler who competes in a typically American style. I see no dedication to the sport, or even to his own body. Plus, he has drawn the scorn of many Japanese fans during his trips to the Orient because of the way he will stoop to any level to win. He shows no pride, no determination. He typifies the U.S. through and through."

Prof. Tanaka, a three-time co-holder of the WWF World tag team title with Mr. Fuji, is currently a successful actor.

LARRY HENNIG

"Good kid, good talent. Landell is a no-nonsense brawler who doesn't ask for mercy and never gives any. Here's what I like best about him: You ever watch his eyes when he scores a pinfall? He's totally thrilled when he gets a victory, and that's the way you have to be to become a success in this profession. And I just like the way he kicks and punches. His bleached-blond hair don't do much for me, but otherwise he's a winner."

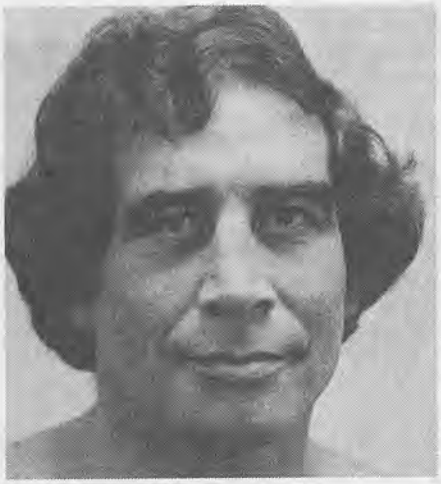
Larry "The Ax" Hennig is a four-time former AWA World tag team champion; he held three of those titles with Harley Race.



LOU THESZ

"There's very little wrong with Landell's style, as far as I can see, although he breaks the rules too often for my tastes. But if he doesn't settle down in one federation for longer than a few weeks, he'll be known as nothing more than a vagabond. Look where he's wrestled in the last few years: NWA, AWA, CWA, USWA, and every independent federation there is. He has to settle down so he can establish himself as a real championship contender."

Lou Thesz held the NWA World title six times during his fabulous 50-year career. Many consider him the greatest all-around wrestler in history.



JACK BRISCO

"I wrestled Buddy late in my career, and I was impressed by his balance and his wherewithal when he was in the ring. He really does know what he's doing. But like a lot of wrestlers, he seems to be another guy who is burying his natural skills under a facade of being some kind of a tough guy. Landell could be a classic scientific wrestler if he wanted to. But instead, it's just kick, gouge, and maul all the time. It's a real shame, in my opinion."

Jack Brisco is a two-time former NWA World champion, and a three-time former NWA World tag team champion with brother Jerry.

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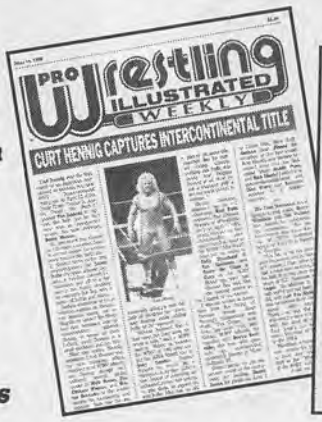
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Photos by David Fitzgerald

Hulk Hogan knows what a dangerous wrestler "Mr. Perfect" Curt Hennig has become.

CURT HENNIG:

MAKING THE WORLD PAY FOR HIS PAST IMPERFECTION

By Dave Rosenbaum

WHEN ONE THINKS of Curt Hennig—if one thinks of him at all—one pictures an arrogant son of a gun who calls himself "Mr. Perfect."

Of course, Hennig's attitude is understandable. He is the WWF Intercontinental champion, the holder of one of the most prestigious belts in the entire sport, and he is virtually ignored by his federation and the fans.

WWF fans know him as "Mr. Perfect," but Curt Hennig had to struggle down a long and arduous path to get to the WWF Intercontinental title. It's those past indignities that have made Hennig so belligerent today!

In the WWF, after all, an injured Hulk Hogan takes precedence over *everyone*—even World champion Ultimate Warrior who, by all championship rights, should be *the* man in the WWF spotlight, with Hennig coming in a close second.

So Hennig finds himself struggling to gain respect in a federation where respect is doled out in meager portions. But Hennig's attitude has roots that run much deeper, and the struggle for respect dates back many years.

When Hennig lost the AWA World title to Jerry Lawler in 1988, he was convinced he was victimized by biased refereeing. That made him all the more determined to become a champion again.

After Hennig and Scott Hall (above) lost the AWA World tag team title in 1986, Hennig became increasingly bitter, eventually turning against his friend Greg Gagne (below).

Indeed, there are many embarrassments in Hennig's past, embarrassments that are clear indications as to why Hennig adopted the "Mr. Perfect" moniker—and why, deep down, that name mocks his very career.

"A big problem in Hennig's past was his on-again, off-again relationship with the Gagnes," explains current AWA World champion Larry Zbyszko, who was close friends with Hennig during his AWA years. "As recently as 1988, Hennig was feuding with Greg Gagne, but way back in the late-'70s, he was trained for his pro debut by Verne Gagne."

"A lot of that feud with Greg had to do with the fact that Verne and Larry Hennig were bitter enemies," said veteran reporter Matt Brock. "They had some hellacious wars in the '60s with each other, and it was something to see their sons pick up where the dads left off. But hell, if I were Hennig, I'd have all kinds of mental games being played in my head because of that war. Deep down, I'd guess he felt probably very guilty about that feud with Greg, what with being trained by Verne and all." Another seed of bitterness in Hennig must have been planted on May 18, 1986, in Hammond, Indiana. That was when Hennig and Scott Hall lost the AWA World heavyweight title to "Playboy" Buddy Rose and "Pretty Boy" Doug Somers, who were managed by "Sensational" Sherri Martel.

In that match, Hall was counted out of the ring due to interference from Col. DeBeers. When the belts were awarded to Rose and Somers, Hennig and Hall were stunned.

"I remember that real well," said Stan Hansen, who was AWA World champion at the time. "It was one of the biggest rook jobs I've ever seen in my life. Unbelievable. I know a lot of people, even today, call it the biggest AWA upset ever.

"The thing I've always heard about Hennig, though," Hansen continued, "was that it ate away at him to lose to Rose and Somers. Rose is obviously a mound of blubber, and Hennig, with his scientific skills, probably feels worlds superior to Somers. Pretty big ego blow to the boy, I suppose, which is why I wouldn't give you two cents and a chili bean for a man's ego."

"A lot of people say that Curt was never the same after that," recalls Hall, "and I'm afraid I have to agree with them. Our team split up right after that decision, and Curt got real moody, started getting real aggressive in his matches. It wasn't long after that that the punching incident happened."

Hall refers to a tag team bout late in 1986 in which Hennig, who was teaming with Greg Gagne, punched his partner in the face.

"I forgave him for that," Gagne says, "but it was never the same for the two of us. He wrestled Nick Bockwinkel for the AWA World belt, and was real frustrated when he couldn't win the title. He finally *did* defeat Bockwinkel [on May 2, 1987], but by then he was so bitter, it hardly seemed like a real victory."

And one more reflection of the man's bitterness: At the end of 1987, Hennig was voted "Most Improved Wrestler of the Year" by the readers of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* magazine; he refused to accept the award, feeling he should have won "Wrestler of the Year" honors.

"Hennig is a very disturbed individual," said noted psychologist Dr. Sidney M. Basil. "On the one hand, he's

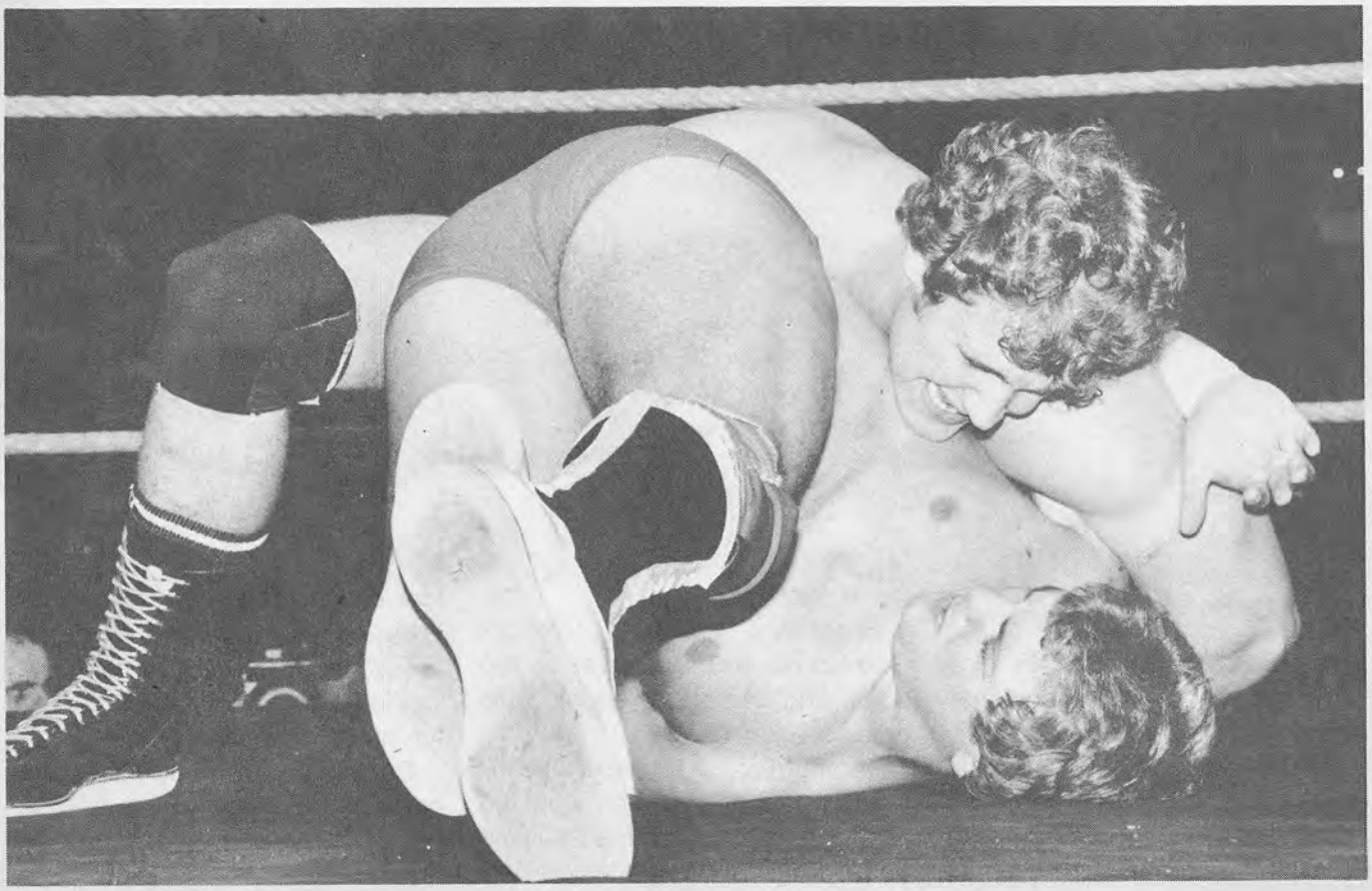
Hennig's victory over Nick Bockwinkel for the AWA World belt in 1987 (left) confirmed in his mind that rulebreaking was the way to go. Early in his career, wrestling opponents the caliber of Eddie Gilbert (bottom), Hennig enjoyed only moderate success.

honored as being among the very best scientific wrestlers in the sport; on the other hand, he's suffered a world of indignity at the hands of wrestlers he could pin in seconds given a fair match. Hennig against Rose? No contest. Somers? DeBeers? Same thing. Even Hogan and Ultimate Warrior can't hold a candle to Hennig's scientific repertoire.

"It's quite understandable, even if it is rather distasteful," Basil continued. "Hennig *knows* he's better than all the rest, and he resents them getting attention and success while he doesn't. Even now, while he's Intercontinental champion, Hogan and Warrior get all the attention. Compare the I-C title today to when Randy Savage held the belt. Far different situation. Hennig, you see, feels he deserves the kind of attention Savage got when he held that belt. Hence his penchant for brutality and his determination to make everyone else—all those *inferior* wrestlers, in his mind—pay for the fact that they're getting what he feels *he* deserves."

Basil took a thoughtful pause before adding one final comment:

"It's rather sad, really." □



TOMMY RICH'S LAST GRASP FOR GLORY—

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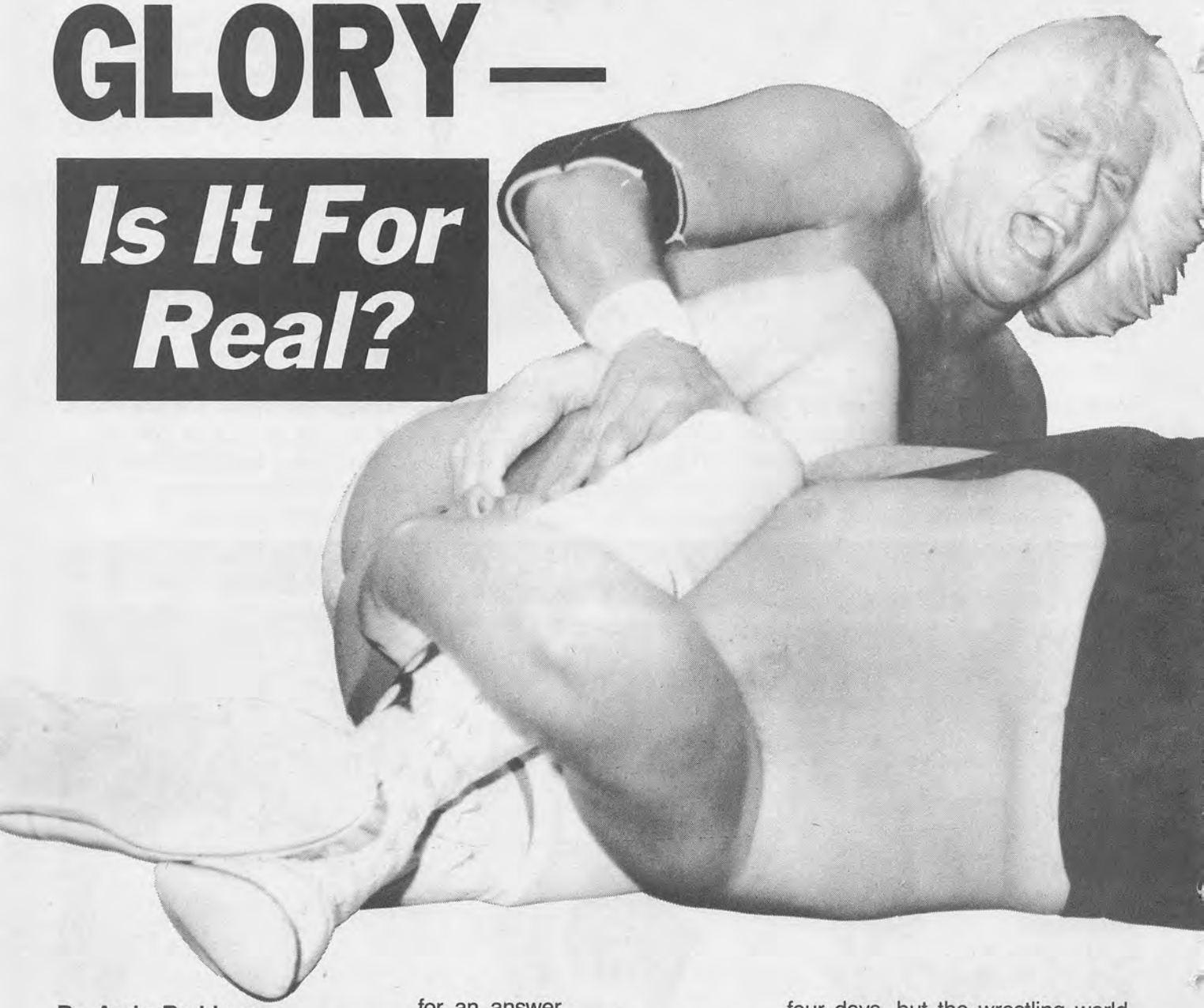


By Andy Rodriguez

WHEN DREAMS OF glory are reached too soon, how hard is it to retain your desire?

After winning the Grand Slam of tennis at age 18, Steffi Graf wondered what she could do for an encore. She is still searching for an answer.

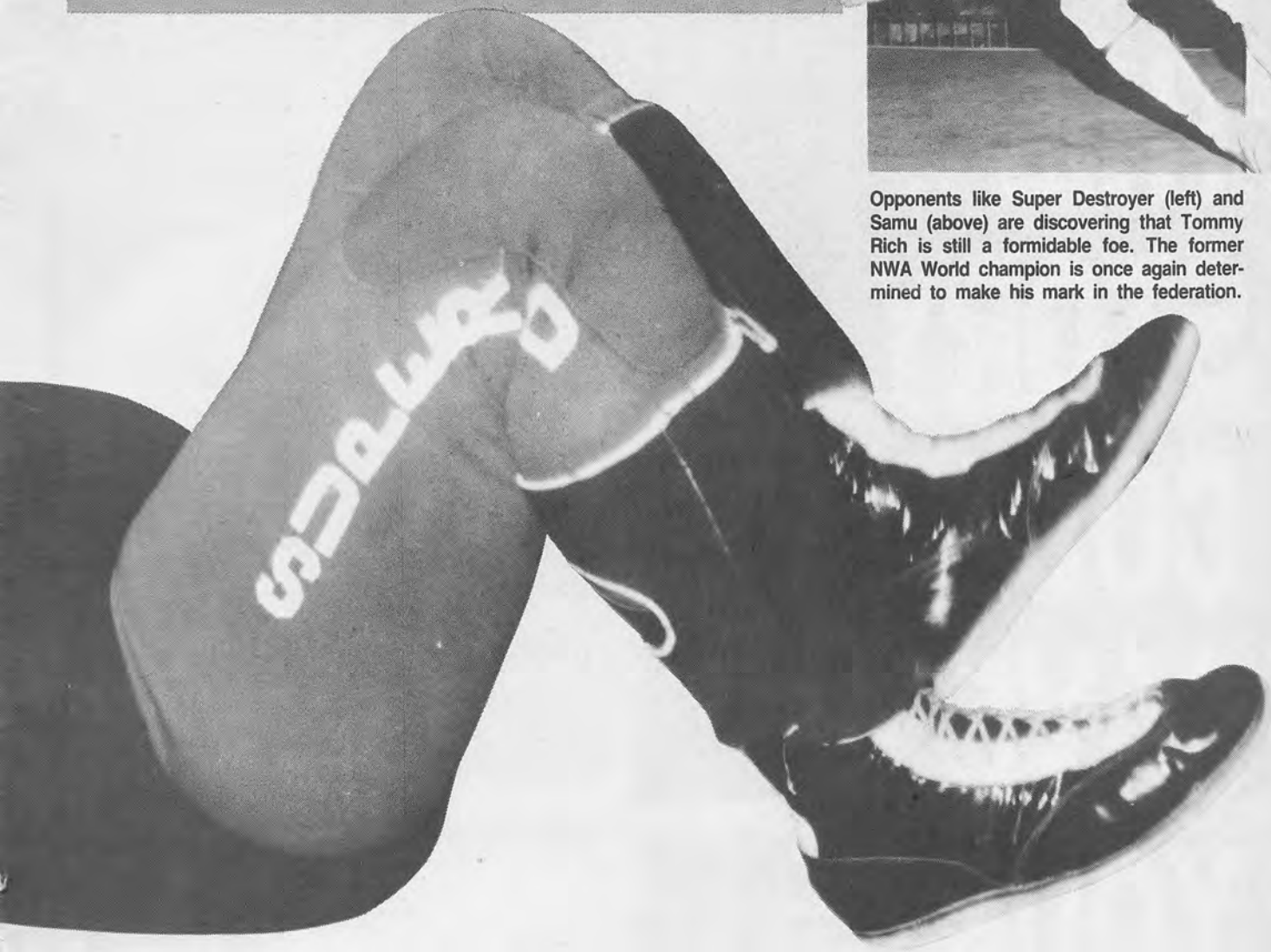
Baseball pitcher Dwight Gooden did so much, possibly too soon, and has never equaled his great season of 1985.

Tommy Rich was young, possibly too young, when he won the NWA World title from Harley Race in 1981. His title reign lasted only four days, but the wrestling world knew it had a star on its hands . . . a champion . . . a man who would go on to dominate the sport for many years to come.

But that never happened. Rich never again won a world title. Rarely did he ever contend for one. And for the past nine years,

In 1981, Tommy Rich won the NWA World title. Since then, his career has been a series of failed comebacks. Now he's trying yet another comeback. Will it end in championship glory, or will "Wildfire" have burned himself out for the final time?

Opponents like Super Destroyer (left) and Samu (above) are discovering that Tommy Rich is still a formidable foe. The former NWA World champion is once again determined to make his mark in the federation.



Rich has bounced from federation to federation, from comeback to failed comeback, searching to recover what he apparently has lost.

Now, at 32 years old, he's trying again. Rich recently returned to the NWA for yet another go-round, yet another attempt to climb the ladder of contention and move into position to capture the NWA World title.

Is it, clearly, his last shot at regaining his former glory.

Is that goal realistic?

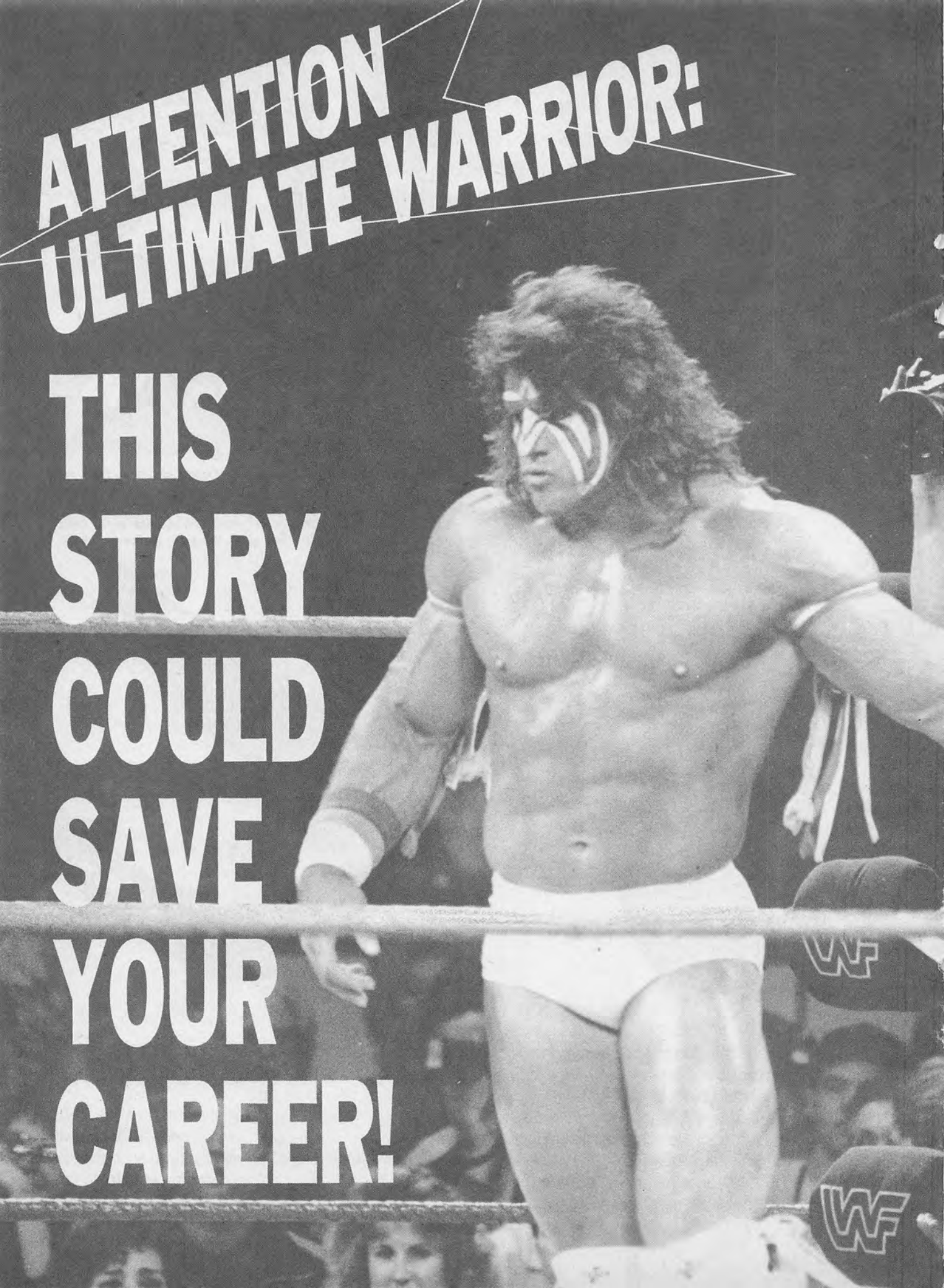
"I'm here because I know what I can do," said Rich after a recent victory over Super Destroyer. "People say it's over for me, but I know it isn't. I've been trying for a long time, and this is no time to give up."

As if to show the world that, this time, his comeback *is* for real, Rich has slimmed down considerably. The sizable gut that hindered prior comebacks is almost

(Continued on page 58)

ATTENTION ULTIMATE WARRIOR:

THIS STORY COULD SAVE YOUR CAREER!



By Dave Rosenbaum

WELL, ULTIMATE WARRIOR, here you are. Page 34 of *The Wrestler.* Enjoy this month's issue so far? Or did you grab a copy off of your local newsstand and rip out the first 33 pages?

We can't blame you. As far as you're concerned, your career doesn't need saving. After all, you're the WWF World champion, king of the hill, top of the heap.

You're young and you've done it all. You're a former WWF Intercontinental champ. You've got the body and the looks. You've got the strength and the power.

You're an incredibly dominant WWF World champion, Ultimate Warrior. Your career doesn't need saving . . . or does it? If you continue at your current pace, you'll soon burn out. Read our special message to you—before it's too late!

You toppled Hulk Hogan. Curt Hennig, the self-proclaimed "Mr. Perfect" and the current Intercontinental champion, has been no match for your physical prowess. And how about that Rick Rude, thinking he could give you a match. Preposterous!

Okay, Mr. Warrior, here's the warning: Life isn't always a bed of roses. The ups come with the downs. Glory is always accompanied by heartache.

Remember when you lost the I-C belt to Rude? That only happened a little more than a year ago. Mortality really isn't *that* far away, is it?

How about Randy Savage? He invaded the WWF, just like you did, and was almost unbeatable. He won the Intercontinental title and went on to win a tournament for the WWF World title. Held it for almost a year. Then he made the mistake of earning Hogan's wrath. He's not champion anymore.

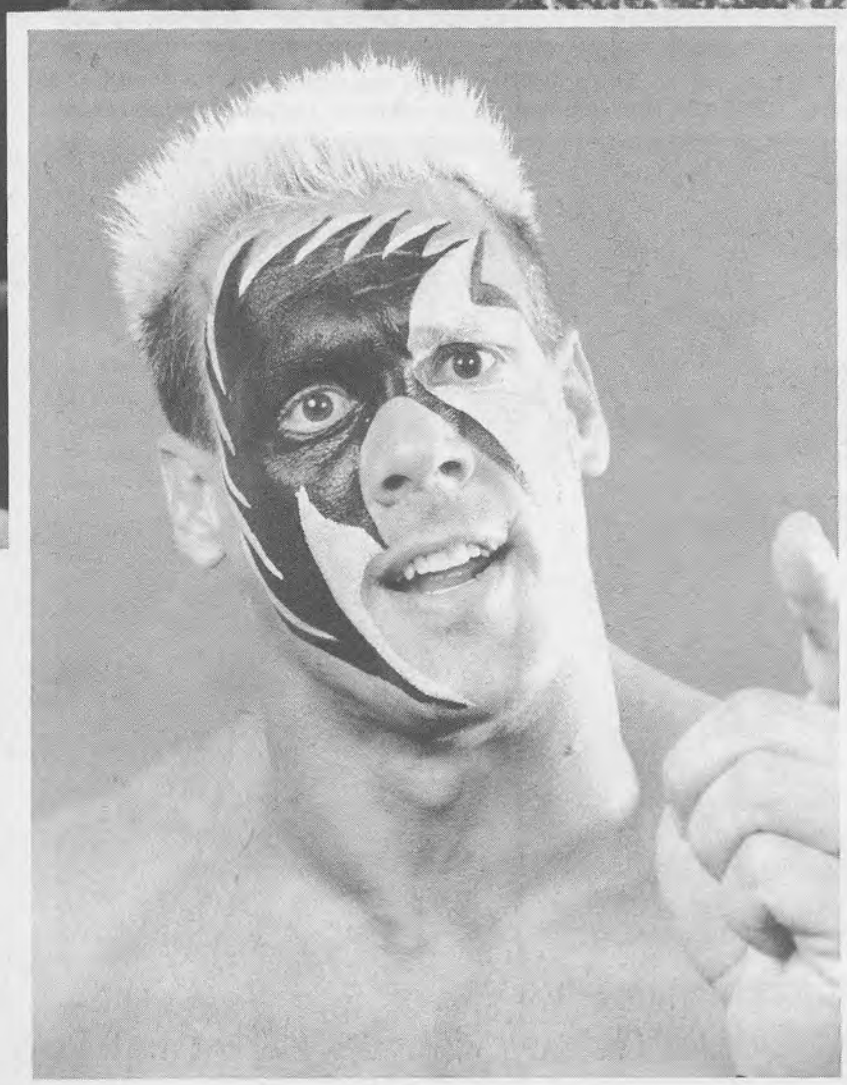
(Continued on page 60)

The Ultimate Warrior has dominated Rick Rude (top) and turned back the challenge of Intercontinental champ Curt Hennig (below), but he still hasn't completely proven himself.

Photos by David Fitzgerald

A Special Report By Sting

HOW RIC FLAIR



By Sting

RIC FLAIR. THERE was a time when the mere mention of that name brought fear into a wrestler's eyes.

It wasn't that Flair was so dangerous or fearsome, and it wasn't that a man risked serious injury by stepping into the ring against him. Flair, after all, is no giant or superhuman; just a great wrestler—well, he *was* just a great wrestler.

A man would walk into the ring against Flair and know that he

Ric Flair is a superior wrestler to Junkyard Dog, but JYD has pinned him on several occasions. Sting maintains Flair is slipping.

Ric Flair was once the greatest all-around wrestler in the sport, but now he's become an embarrassment. Sting understands the changes Flair has undergone as well as anyone—and he knows what the "Nature Boy" must do to regain his past glory!

CAN REGAIN HIS GREATNESS

faced the greatest challenge of his life. He knew that he was facing one of the greatest all-around wrestlers that ever lived, a miraculous ring technician, a fabulous scientist, a genuine wizard of the squared circle.

And wrestlers were often hesitant to face him because they knew that defeat was a near certainty and embarrassment was only a step behind. Flair could humiliate the best of them.

Not anymore. The fear, the apprehension, the sinking feeling in the pit of the stomach that wrestlers used to bring into the ring for matches against Flair, they've all been left behind.

Ric Flair is now an ordinary mortal. His weaknesses have been exposed. And his only strength—the outside interference of The Four

(Continued on page 62)

Exclusive SummerSlam PREVIEW & ANALYSIS

HULK HOGAN VS. EARTHQUAKE

Hulk Hogan needed a vacation after he lost his WWF World title to The Ultimate Warrior at WrestleMania VI. Instead he got Earthquake, who supplied Hogan with that vacation in a much different way. Now Hogan is ready to get back to work—in the main event of SummerSlam!

THE HULK HOGAN-Earthquake feud was violent and, not surprisingly, inconclusive. Hogan, intent on ending Earthquake's reign of WWF terror, often seemed more concerned with injuring the 462-pound monster than with beating him. Earthquake's goal was more obvious: to put the "Hulkster" out of commission permanently.

He almost succeeded on May 15 in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Moments after Hogan defeated Earthquake by disqualification due to Jimmy Hart's interference, Hogan and Hart were interviewed by Brother Love.

Earthquake, however, wasn't there, and Hogan wondered why. It didn't take him long to find out. Earthquake snuck up from behind, smashed Hogan with a chair, and delivered three "earthquake" splashes. Hogan was carried out of the arena . . . and into the summer . . . on a stretcher.

The damage was serious: injuries to the sternum and ribs have kept Hogan on the sidelines since that night. Earthquake, meanwhile, has continued to wreak havoc in the WWF.

But Hogan has refused to succumb. The injuries, originally thought to be career-threatening, are healing. It is now evident that Hogan will recover. Whether the recovery will be 100 percent, however, remains to be seen.

But the "Hulkster" has put the wrestling world—and Earthquake—on notice that he is out for revenge: Earthquake will not get away without a battle.

At press time, that battle seemed inevitably headed for the Philadelphia Spectrum and the main event of SummerSlam '90 on August 27. Hogan and Earthquake are expected to square off for the first time since May 15, a true grudge match in every sense of the word.

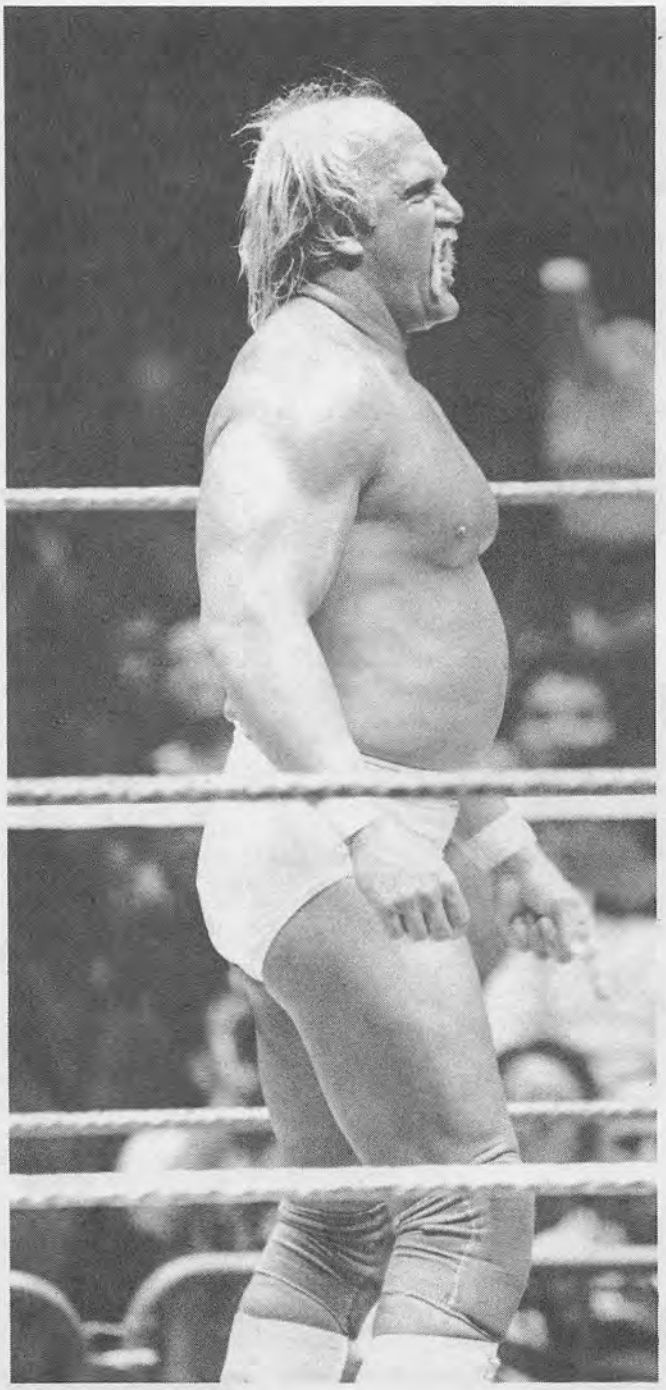
Is Hogan ready for such a match? Has he recovered enough from his injuries to withstand a match against the dangerous and powerful Earthquake? Can Earthquake stop Hogan when the "Hulkster" is bent on revenge?

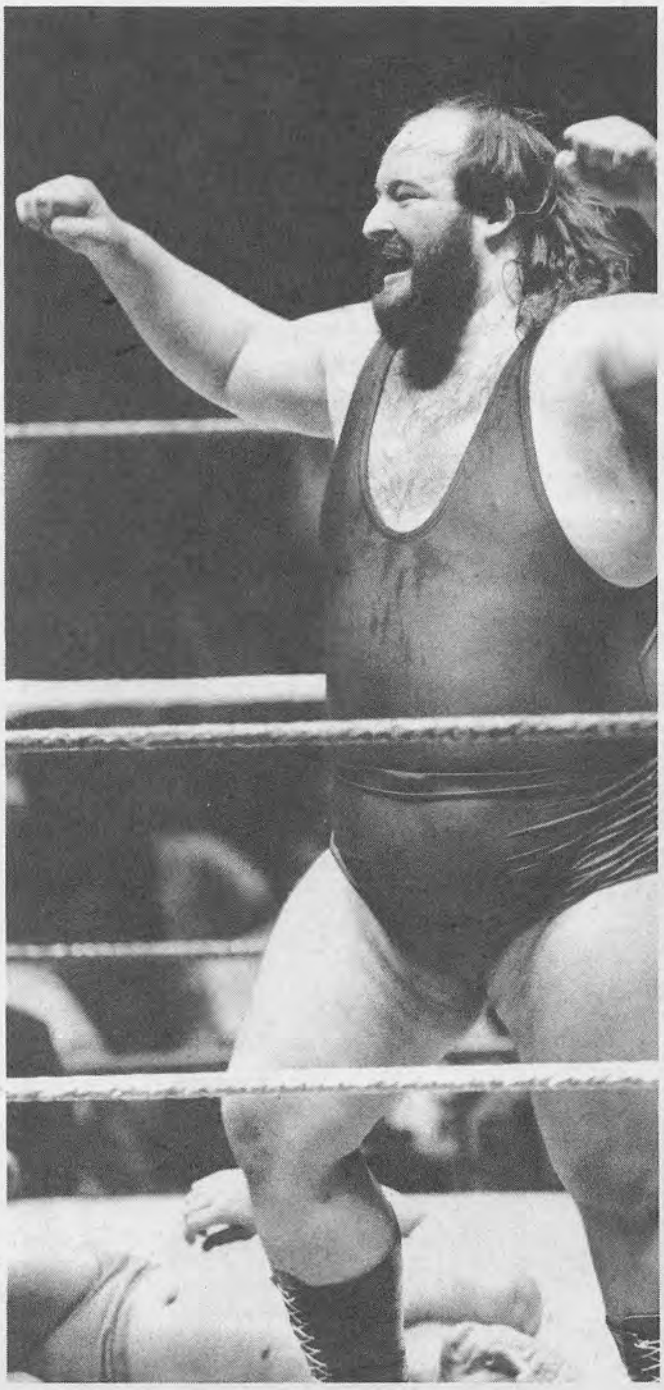
These questions, which will be answered on August 27, are addressed in depth in this exclusive preview and analysis of what should be a war—a war set up by Brother Love to reach its thunderous climax in the City of Brotherly Love.

PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

HULK HOGAN is 6'8" tall and 302 pounds of solid muscle . . . Has had a relatively injury-free career, though a rib injury at the hands of King Kong Bundy prior to WrestleMania II makes the Earthquake attack seem like *deja vu* . . . Despite his advancing age, remains one of the strongest and most powerful men in the sport . . . Capable of lifting and slamming men as large as Earthquake . . . Committed to a total fitness program, though workouts were curtailed by injuries . . . Concentration on cardiovascular exercise over the past few years has improved his stamina.

EARTHQUAKE is 6'4" tall and 462 pounds of rippling blubber . . . Formerly a top sumo wrestler in Japan . . . Relies on bulk, not muscle, for his incredible power, although there are hints of significant muscle mass in his arms . . . Stamina hasn't been tested because of his ability to put away opponents in minutes . . . The opposite of Hogan at the training table: favors high-protein, high-fat foods instead of fruits, vegetables, and reasonable portions of chicken and fish . . . Would have to add *some* muscle if he's to make a serious run at a title.





OVERALL ABILITY

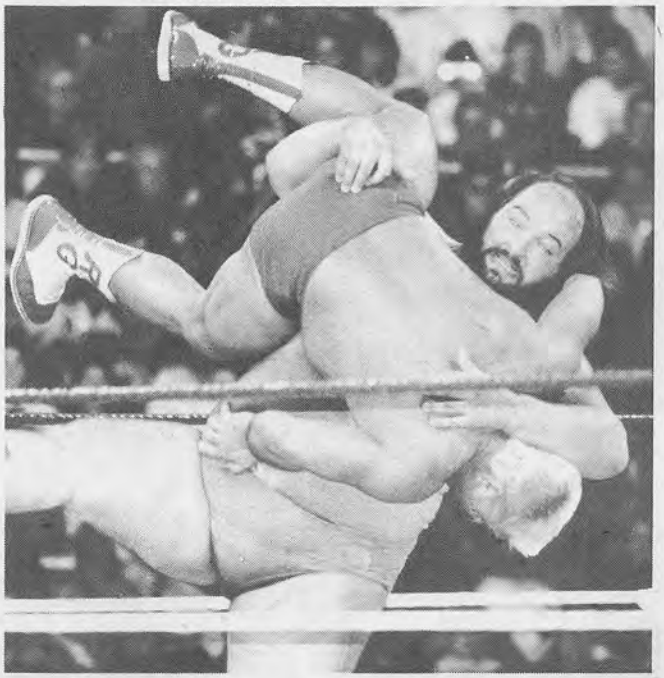
HULK HOGAN is not an outstanding all-around wrestler, but the combination of strength, desire, and a few scientific moves here and there makes him one of the greatest champions the sport has ever seen . . . Proved during a recent tour of Japan that, if necessary, he can wrestle more scientifically than U.S. fans are used to seeing . . . Relies on a predictable finishing combination of a bodyslam and a legdrop, though it's a combination most opponents are helpless against . . . Is probably a better wrestler now than he was during his first title reign.

EARTHQUAKE is a maniacal brawler who relies on his dangerous mindset to overcome his lack of wrestling skills . . . Only real move is his "earthquake" splash, for which he leaps into the air and lands squatting on his opponent's chest . . . This move has seriously injured several wrestlers, including Hogan . . . Is surprisingly agile for such a big man . . . Sumo training has provided him with the ability to move his bulk around the ring effectively . . . Has been criticized for going into big matches without a specific game plan.

Hogan whips Earthquake

Earthquake splashes Ronnie Garvin

Hulk boots the 'Quake



'Quake powerslams Garvin

INTANGIBLES

The fans . . . Jimmy Hart . . . Hogan's desire for revenge . . . Jimmy Hart.

Hart, Earthquake's ruthless manager, set up the situation that led to Hogan's injury. Who knows what will happen this time? Can the referee—and Hogan—keep Hart a non-factor, or will he manage to interfere and turn the match into a sham? The WWF's selection of a referee for this match will play a significant part in its outcome.

Of course, we can't forget that Hogan rarely loses when revenge is a factor. Hogan rightfully feels that he was set up by Hart, Earthquake, and Brother Love. He is determined to even the score. And the issue of cornermen remains open at press time. Hart reportedly wants Dino Bravo at ringside; Hogan is pushing for Tugboat. If cornermen *are* allowed, the equation of the match changes significantly.

There's also the possibility that Earthquake has *already* been psyched out by Hogan. The "Hulkster" is the first wrestler to come back at Earthquake after being sent to the sidelines by Earthquake. The big Canadian might be wondering what Hogan is *really* made of.

Hogan toys with Jimmy Hart

'Quake rams Hulk

OVERALL ANALYSIS

Hogan's physical condition is the big question. Has he fully recovered from the injuries, or did he merely seize the opportunity for revenge without considering the consequences? If Hogan isn't at least 90 percent recovered, his chances for victory are slim. The Earthquake is too dangerous, and Hart is too sneaky.

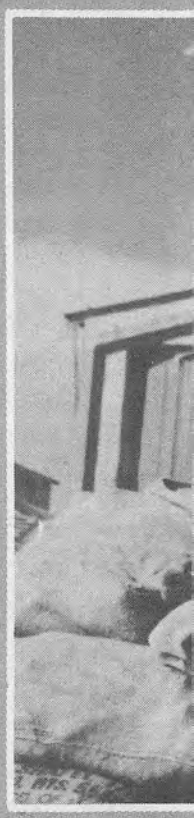
There's no question, however, that Hogan is more talented, stronger, and, when mad, even more dangerous than Earthquake. With a loud, cheering crowd behind him, Hogan will have all the encouragement he needs. And, the feeling here is that Hogan would not risk permanent injury for a rematch against Earthquake; Hogan values his pride, but he also values his life.

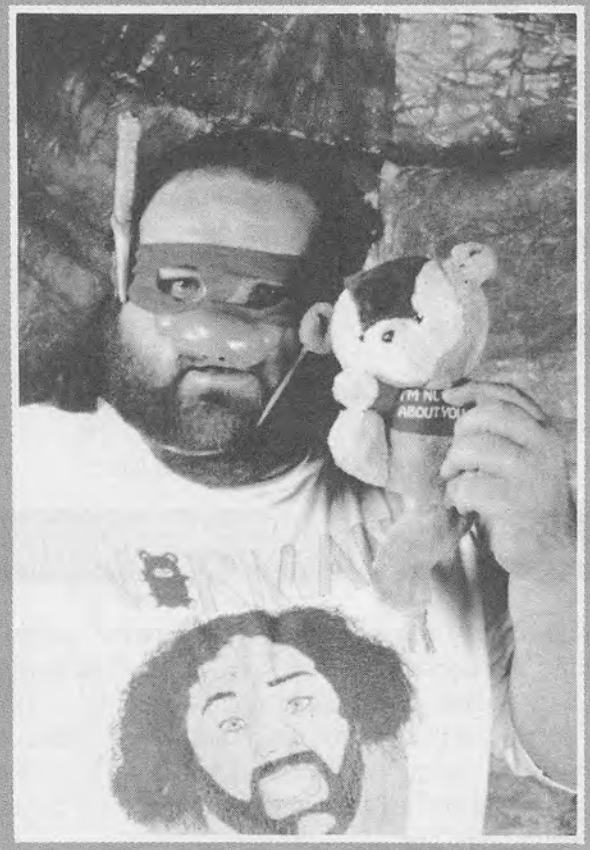
Expect a good, old-fashioned brawl. You won't see a single scientific maneuver in the entire match, just two men tearing into one another with the ferocity of wild beasts.

It won't be pretty. It might not be fun. But in the end, Hogan will raise his hands in victory once again. □

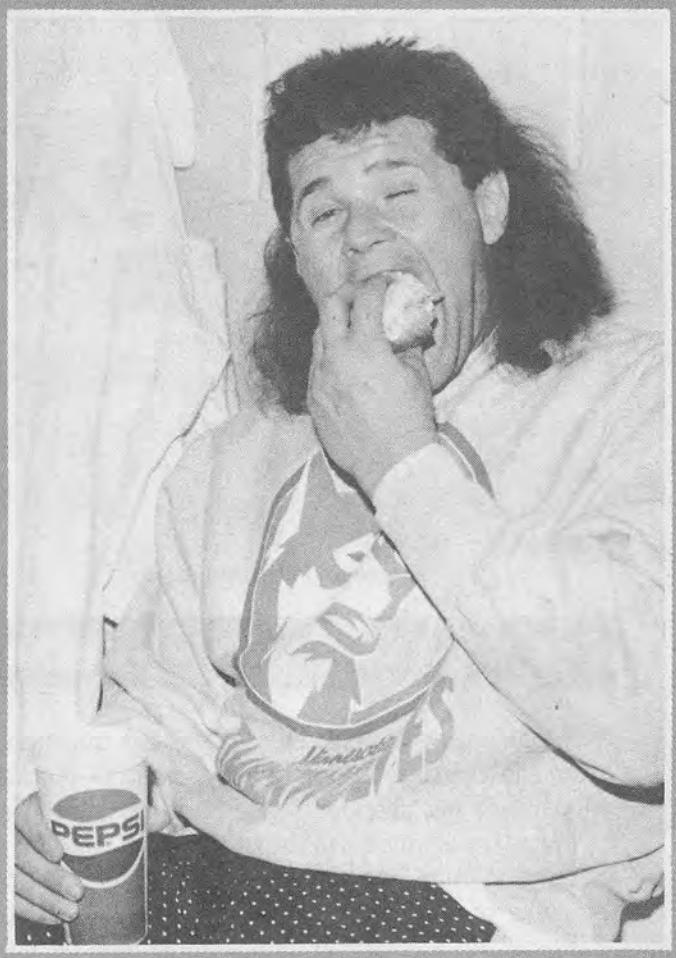
BEYOND THE SQUARED CIRCLE

▲ LPWA champion Susan Sexton relaxes in the pool before a title defense.





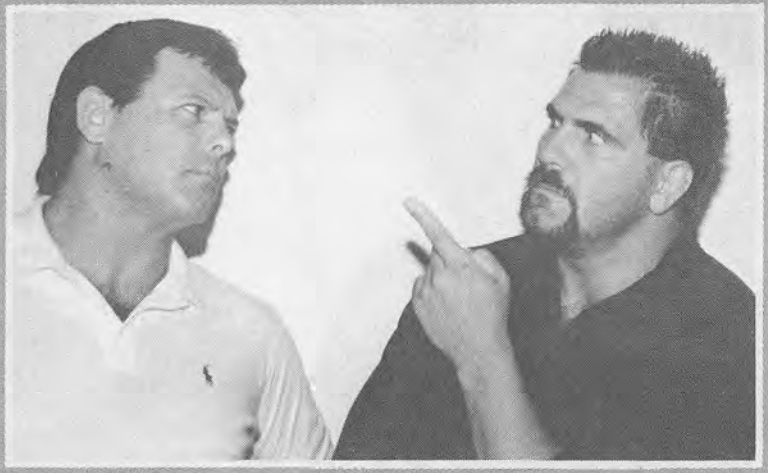
▲ Teenage Mutant Ninja *Norman?* The affable big man has become one of the NWA's most popular stars.



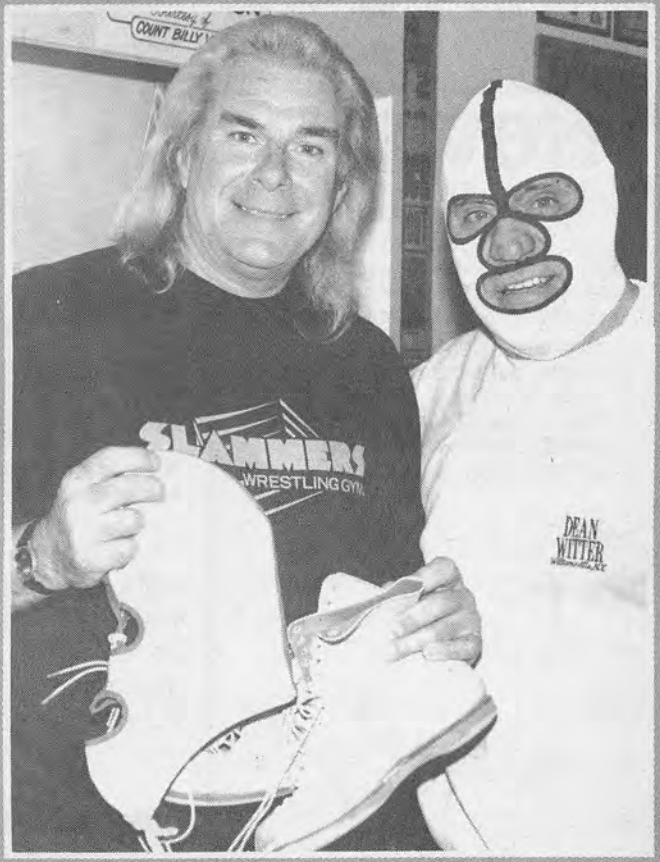
▲ Paul Diamond catches a quick bite before preparing for another ring battle.

◄ Retired grappler Rip Hawk and his partner, Dave Dziuk, discuss microwave popcorn-on-the-cob, their thriving business.

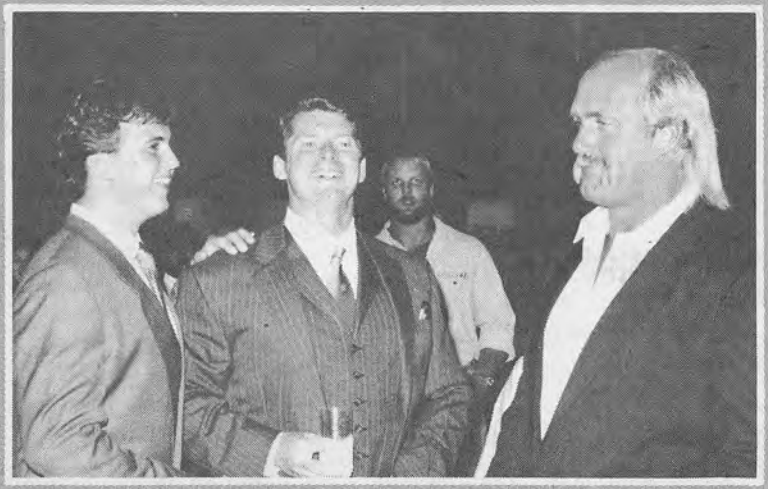
▲ Rick Steiner realizes the importance of limbering up for several minutes before a match.



▲ Nikita Koloff warns Jerry "The King" Lawler that his kingdom will soon be conquered by the "Russian sickle."



▲ Verne Langdon, owner of Slammer's Gym in California, accepts The Destroyer's boots for the Slammer's wrestling museum and hall of fame.



◄ WWF head Vince McMahon and his son Shane chat with Hulk Hogan at a reception for WWF stars in Tokyo.

(Continued from page 5)

pounds; he must be at least 600 pounds!

I once thought the WWF should suspend Earthquake before he splashes someone like Elizabeth. But now I want Earthquake to stick around. I want to see Hogan make this 600-pound monster suffer for his crimes.

BRIAN RATHJEN
LeClaire, IA

ZBYSZKO'S A ZERO

Once again, you're giving too much space to Larry Zbyszko, as evidenced by his latest diatribe in "Q & A" (August 1990). Even after regaining the AWA World title, Zbyszko still can't resist taking potshots at the fans, his opponents, and everyone else who disagrees with him even slightly.

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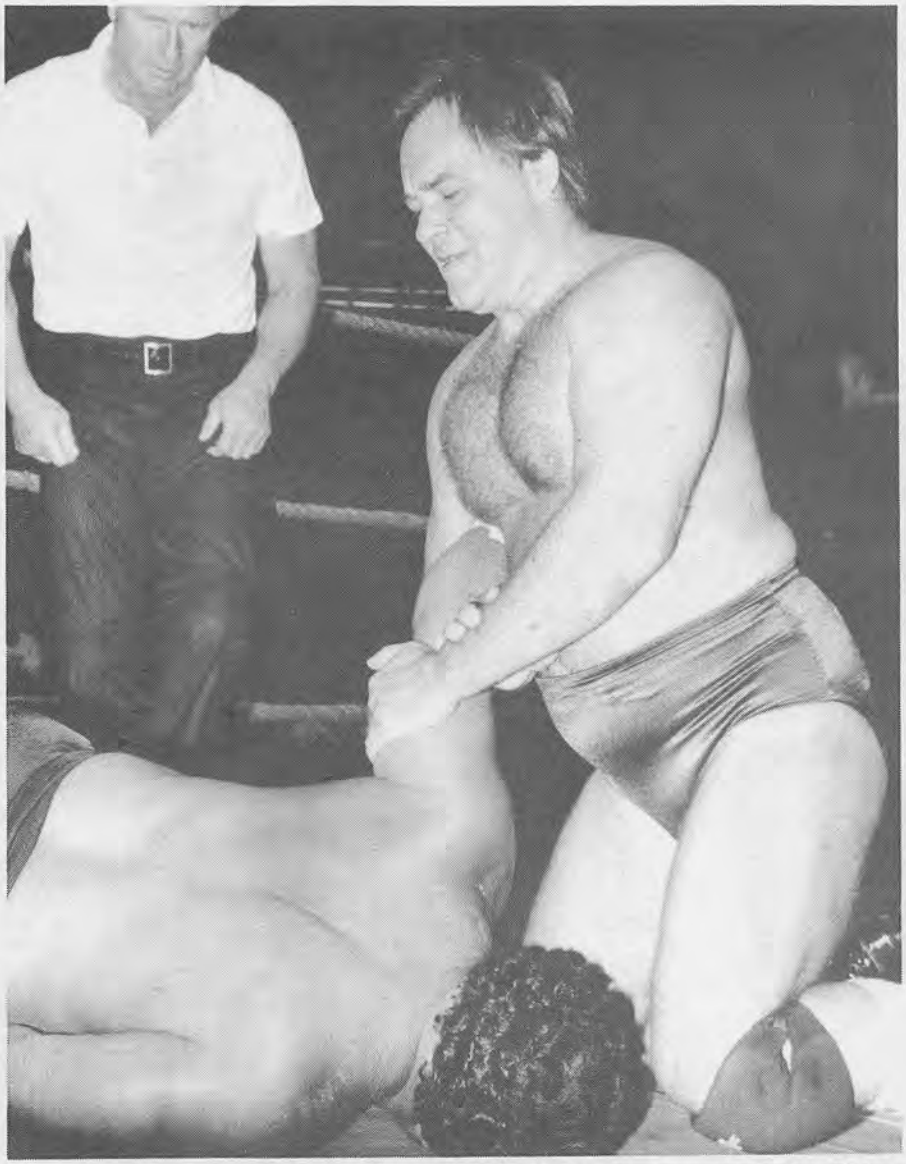


When Larry Zbyszko regained the AWA World title from Mr. Saito, reader Nathan Bishop braced himself for another controversial title reign for the self-proclaimed "Living Legend."

I can't wait until somebody like Nikita Koloff or The Trooper takes that title away from Zbyszko. Then the AWA will have a *real* world champion.

NATHAN BISHOP
Duluth, MN

DUMP HEENAN FOR PIPER

As a devoted wrestling fan, I am writing in regard to Bobby Heenan, co-host of the WWF's *Prime Time Wrestling*.

Bring back Roddy Piper!

Piper is naturally witty, well-informed, and very intelligent, all of which Heenan tries to be, yet miserably fails. With Piper, you never knew *what* to expect, but you knew it would be entertaining and exciting. With Heenan, you know what to expect, and it's always stupid and dull.

Drop the slow wit of Heenan and bring back the quick wit of Piper.

G. KARRAS
St. Joseph, MO

BRUNZELL FAN

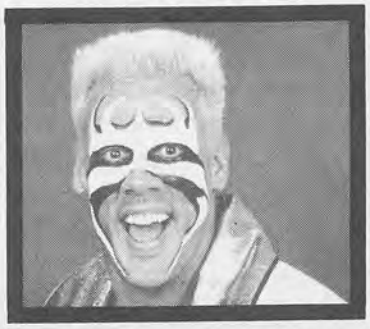
The Wrestler is one of the best wrestling publications around. However, the absence of the legendary Jim

(Continued on page 46)

THIS MONTH IN...

Inside Wrestling

Warning to **THE LEGION OF DOOM**: Recruit a third member to counter **DEMOLITION**



An exclusive "Hotseat" interview with **STING**: "I feel like I've conquered the world!"

PLUS . . .

Those wacky **BUSHWHACKERS**: Puttin' the bruise on **RHYTHM 'N' BLUES!** . . . **MIKE ROTUNDO'S** shocking mission: Infiltrate and destroy **THE STEINERS!** . . . Wrestling's biggest big man: **EL GIGANTE**—Phenomenon or fraud? . . . **TONI ADAMS** and **JEANNIE** square off "One On One"

All this and much more . . .
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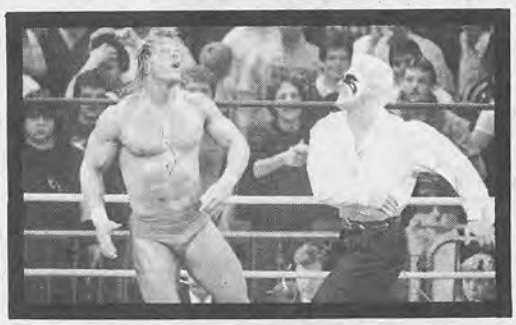

STING must learn a painful lesson: He'll have no friends at the top

Find out why **THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR** is starved for attention

PLUS . . .

Can **THE ROAD WARRIORS** dominate in the WWF? . . . A FULL-COLOR foldout, plus career biography, of **BRUTUS BEEFCAKE** . . . Learn how **TUGBOAT** is charting a course to self-destruction . . . An exclusive "Press Conference" with **TEDDY LONG** . . . The most comprehensive collection of match results available anywhere!

All this and much more . . .
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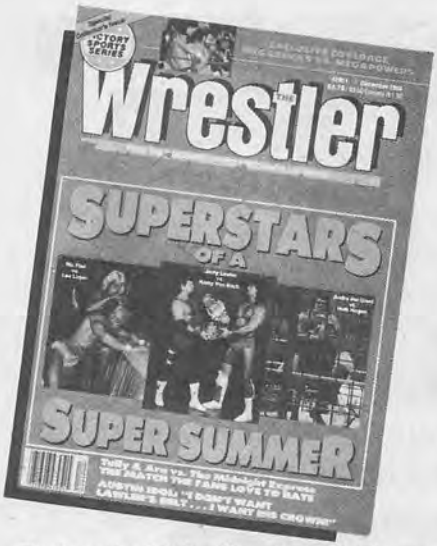
STILL ON SALE!

THE EXCITEMENT LIVES ON!

THE SUPERSTARS OF A SUPER SUMMER!



The December 1988 edition of *The Wrestler* was a collectors' dream! It included a dynamic eight-page FULL-COLOR section featuring "The Superstars Of A Super Summer" competing in some of 1988's greatest cards and matches! Included in this exciting full-color section: Hulk Hogan, Sting, Randy Savage, Lex Luger, Rick Rude, The Ultimate Warrior, Jerry Lawler, Ric Flair, Hacksaw Duggan, The Fantastics, Dusty Rhodes, Ted DiBiase, Barry Windham, The Honky Tonk Man, and Nikita Koloff! Also included in this magnificent special issue is a full analysis of the summer's top action, plus all the regular *Wrestler* stories and features. This issue was a newsstand sellout, but we have a limited number of back issues available for the collectors' bargain price of only $5.00 each. Don't be disappointed—order yours today!

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YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 44)

Brunzell from its pages brings the quality of the magazine down a notch. Jim is the best wrestler ever; give him more space in your magazines.

MARK TAGGART
Rantoul, IL

HONKY TONK STINKS

I want to tell Dave Rosenbaum right now that he is wrong in writing for almost the last two years that The Honky Tonk Man was the greatest Intercontinental champion of all time. Honky Tonk was, by far, the *worst* I-C champion of all time!

In his 15-month reign, Honky didn't wrestle a single title match without the benefit of outside interference from Jimmy Hart or Peggy Sue—or both.

When you also consider how Honky Tonk almost always got himself purposely disqualified or counted out in order to save his title, how his "shake, rattle, and roll" finisher was useless against almost every top contender, and how he constantly used foreign objects, there is no doubt at all that Honky Tonk was the worst I-C champ ever.

It was all very fitting that the man who had the longest title reign was defeated by The Ultimate Warrior in a record-shattering 31 seconds.

What do you think of The Honky Tonk Man now, Mr. Rosenbaum?

JOHN DORSEY
Hunterdon, NJ

BRAVO, WARRIOR

In his June 1990 "Blindsided" column, Bob Smith wrote some ridiculous things about The Ultimate Warrior. He insulted the Warrior for not claiming that he'll win the belt for his fans.

You have to be kidding! Ultimate is always mentioning his warriors. He is incredibly loyal to us warriors, and we're loyal to him, too!

You can insult the Warrior all you want, Smith. But you weren't the first man to pin Hulk cleanly in about seven years, were you?

BRYCE McNEIL
Sydney, Nova Scotia □

The Honky Tonk Man may have beaten Rick Steamboat for the Intercontinental title in 1987, but reader John Dorsey believes Honky was the worst I-C champ ever.

BACK ISSUES OF

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THE Wrestler

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March 1982/Stories include: Slaughter, Albano, Flair, Race.

April 1982/Stories include: Brisco, Armstrongs, Valentine, Santana.

May 1982/Stories include: Backlund, Von Erich, Graham, Rich.

June 1982/Stories include: Steamboat, Reed, Albano, Piper.

July 1982/Stories include: Rich, Sawyer, Flair, Steamboat.

August 1982/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Steamboat, Mulligans, Piper.

September 1982/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, Armstrong, Blair.

October 1982/Stories include: Snuka, Rhodes, Santana, Piper.

November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Piper, Blair.

December 1982/Stories include: Snuka, Rich, Kamala, Junkyard Dog.

January 1983/Stories include: Putski, Muraco, Windham, Bockwinkel.

February 1983/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Backlund, Rich, Kamala.

April 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Tiger Mask, Sammartino, Bundy.

May 1983/Stories include: Samoans, Von Erich, Rhodes, Orndorff.

June 1983/Stories include: Windham, Martel, Brody, Andre.

July 1983/Stories include: Flair, Adonis, Sullivan, Zbyszko.

August 1983/Stories include: Valentine, Blanchard, Windham, Street.

September 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Briscos.

October 1983/Stories include: Race, Sawyer, Briscos, Bass.

November 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Santana, Von Erichs, Kabuki.

December 1983/Stories include: Mascaras, Superstar, Von Erich, Zbyszko.

March 1984/Stories include: Santana, Hogan, Von Erich, Sawyers.

April 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Rhodes.

May 1984/Stories include: Windham, Brody, Road Warriors, Junkyard Dog.

June 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Billy Jack, Flair, Armstrong.

July 1984/Stories include: Rich, Billy Jack, Valiant, Von Erich.

August 1984/Stories include: Garvin, Sullivan, Freebirds, Street.

September 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Piper, Steamboat, Billy Jack.

October 1984/Stories include: Flair, Rhodes, Magnum T.A., Bundy.

November 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Von Erich, Piper, Brody.

December 1984/Stories include: Martel, Santana, Von Erich, Steamboat.

January 1985/Stories include: Von Erich, Warriors, Albano, Koloffs.

February 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Santana, Billy Jack, Nikita Koloff.

March 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Warriors, Martel, Rude.

April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Von Erich-Adams, Flair, Tonga & Snuka.

May 1985/Stories include: Warriors. Backlund, Santana, Rich.

June 1985/Stories include: Rhodes, Windham, Rich, Hogan.

July 1985/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Reed, Martel, Sunshine.

September 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Savage, R&R Express.

October 1985/Stories include: Flair, Windham, Shultz, Martel.

November 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Zbyszko, R&R Express, Von Erichs.

December 1985/Stories include: Rude, Fantastics, Muraco, Uncle Elmer.

February 1986/Stories include: Hogan, Orndorff, Flair, Hansen.

March 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Duggan, Hansen-Martel.

April 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Rude, Lugar, Hogan, Magnum T.A.

May 1986/Stories include: Zbyszko, Von Erichs, Santana-Ventura, Hillbillies.

June 1986/Stories include: Lugar, Hernandez, Flair-Bockwinkel, Hogan, T.A.

July 1986/Stories include: King Kong Bundy, Koloff vs. Graham, Ric Flair.

August 1986/Stories include: Snuka, Bulldogs, Freebirds, Warriors, Duggan.

September 1986/Stories include: Fantastics, Adonis, Morton-Flair, Brody.

October 1986/Stories include: Nikita-Magnum, Nord, Bruno, Kerry, Windham.

November 1986/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan-Orndorff, Von Erich.

December 1986/Stories include: Flair, Bockwinkel, Hogan, Gilbert, Nikita.

January 1987/Stories include: Heenan, Garvins, DiBiase, Borne & Sawyer.

February 1987/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Gordy, Steamboat-Roberts.

March 1987/Stories include: Windham, Nikita, Adias, Savage-Steamboat.

April 1987/Stories include: Hogan, Luger, Rich-Lawler, R&R Express.

May 1987/Stories include: Flair-Nikita, Andre-Hogan, UWF, Windham, Hennig.

June 1987/Stories include: Flair-Windham, Can-Ams, Rhodes-Murdoch.

July 1987/Stories include: Cornette, Hyatt, Luger, Harts, Adams, Hansen.

August 1987/Stories include: Can-Ams, Luger vs. Nikita, Fantastics, Koko, Nord.

September 1987/Stories include: Koloffs, Harts, Duggan, Hennig, Hart.

October 1987/Stories include: Savage-Honky Tonk, Horsemen, Patera, Kerry.

November 1987/Stories include: Williams, Luger, Hogan-Khan, Rich.

December 1987/Stories include: Hogan, Windham, Lawler, Flair, Beefcake.

January 1988/Stories include: Nikita-Taylor, Warriors, DiBiase-Duggan.

February 1988/Stories include: Flair, Andre-Hogan, New Breed, Kerry.

March 1988/Stories include: Hogan, Luger-Sting, Calgary, Demolition.

April 1988/Stories include: Bonus 4-page color section! Starrcade, Survivor Series, World Class.

May 1988/Stories include: Horsemen, Hogan, Flair, Fantastics, DiBiase.

June 1988/Stories include: Sting-Flair, DiBiase, Kerry, Nikita, Zenk.

July 1988/Stories include: Fantastics, Hogan, Windham, McMahon, Rich.

August 1988/Stories include: Savage, Windham-Luger split, Demolition, Lawler, Ellering.

September 1988/Stories include: Duggan vs. Andre, Hogan, Windham.

October 1988/Stories include: Rhodes, Fantastics, Hennig, Roberts-Rude.

November 1988/Stories include: Midnight Ex., DiBiase, Bossman, Brody.

January 1989/Stories include: Kevin Von, Rougeaus, Horsemen, Hogan.

February 1989/Stories include: Warriors, Ultimate-Hogan, Bigelow-Gordy.

March 1989/Stories include: Jarrett, Flair, Jake-Andre, Bigelow-Windham.

April 1989/Stories include: Bulldogs, Warriors, Andre, Hogan-Savage.

May 1989/Stories include: Steamboat, Savage-Hogan, Dusty, Valentine.

June 1989/Stories include: Steamboat, Martel, Ultimate-Savage, Luger, Flair.

July 1989/Stories include: Warrior, Hogan-Bravo, Flair-Steamboat, Rhodes.

September 1989/Stories include: Flair-Funk, Piper, Demolition, Zeus.

October 1989/Stories include: Hogan & Beefcake vs. Zeus & Savage, Hyatt, Hayes, Long, Embry, WWF Horsemen.

November 1989/Stories include: Piper-Savage-Hogan, Dusty, Flair-Funk.

December 1989/Stories include: Muta-Sting, Andre-Ultimate, Windham.

January 1990/Stories include: Pillman, Hogan, Rich-Luger, Tully & Arn.

February 1990/Stories include: Sting-Luger, Gordy, Martel, Hogan-Brown.

March 1990/Stories include: Steiners, Flair-Funk, Hogan-Zeus, Survivors.

April 1990/Stories include: Hogan, Luger, Woman, Piper-Heenan, Travis.

May 1990/Stories include: Sting & Ultimate, Bossman, Von Erichs, Hogan.

June 1990/Stories include: Hogan, Rockers, Koloffs, Horsemen, Flair-Luger.

July 1990/Stories include: Poffo, Dusty-Savage, Luger-Flair, Doom, Blanchard.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

(Continued from page 6)

Former heavyweight boxing champion Leon Spinks has refereed bouts between Jerry Lawler and The Snowman.

ring style. Animal and Hawk look bigger and stronger than ever before. It wouldn't surprise me to see them win the WWF tag team title the very first time they tried."

Demolition appears to be taking the threat of the rejuvenated Legion of Doom very seriously. They've added Crush, a massive 6'4", 310-pounder, to the team. Apparently, WWF President **Jack Tunney** is allowing Crush to take the place of Ax, who was forced out of action in June due to an undisclosed (and unconfirmed) injury. Ax has been allowed at ringside while Crush and Smash defend the title, another factor that has the LOD gunning for them.

Tunney is allowing any combination of Demolition members to defend the belts. That means The Legion of Doom may have to face any two of the three members of Demolition, with the third member lurking at ringside.

Animal and Hawk are anxious to get this feud started. If they do beat Demolition, they will be the first team in history to hold the AWA, NWA, and WWF World tag team titles.

While it appears that fear has turned Demolition bad, veteran rulebreaker **Jerry Lawler** has turned good again. "The King" had his USWA title blatantly ripped off during a match against **The Snowman** on June 18 at the Mid-South Coliseum in Memphis. Former world heavyweight boxing champion **Leon Spinks**, a longtime friend of Snowman's, was the special referee for the bout, which quickly turned into a farce.

Lawler, to the surprise of the fans in the arena, did his best to wrestle cleanly throughout the bout. But when he tried to make several pin attempts on Snowman, Spinks refused to make the counts. Finally, Lawler got into an argument with Spinks and hit him. Spinks retaliated by belting Lawler with a right hand, knocking him to the mat. Snowman rolled on top of Lawler for the pin, which Spinks counted immediately. In the locker room after the bout, Lawler got into an argument with his rulebreaking manager, **Ronnie Gossett**, and broke his jaw with a punch to the face.

"I guess I've done a lot of pretty crummy things over the past few months," Lawler said softly after the match, "but nothing I've done merits this kind of an unfair situation. I can't take back all the bad I've done, but what I *can* do is get my title back from that lousy Snowman—and I'll knock out Spinks if he messes with me again."

What's wrong with NWA World champion **Ric Flair**? For several weeks, he refused to defend his title against contenders **Lex Luger** and **Junkyard Dog**, instead opting to take part in six-man tag team matches. And each time he wrestled JYD or Luger, he'd be pinned in surprisingly one-sided non-title matches.

"There's nothing wrong with me that locking up with **Sting** won't cure," insisted the six-time NWA titleholder. "I've had my sights set on that guy for so long that he's all I care about. I tried to put him out of action once, and I almost got the job done. Wait'll you see what I do to him the next time we meet!"

The NWA will return to the Byrne Meadowlands Arena in East Rutherford, New Jersey, on August

Abdullah the Butcher is up to his old tricks again. During a tag team match in the Georgia All-Star area, he turned against his partner, Randy Rose, bloodying him in a brutal attack.

24. The last time the NWA appeared there in April, they attracted nearly 10,000 fans, one of the biggest metropolitan New York crowds of the year . . . The North American Wrestling Assocaition (NAWA), which promotes cards in Virginia and the Carolinas, is holding a tournament to determine its first champion. Among the entrants are: **Ranger Ross**, **Matt Borne**, **Rick Steamboat**, and **Robert Fuller** . . . **Abdullah the Butcher** returned to the Georgia All-Star area and quickly made his presence felt. He turned against his tag team partner, **Randy Rose**, bloodying him in a brutal sneak-attack.

The wild duo of **Beetlejuice** and **Big Juice** regained the Pacific Northwest tag team title from **Curtis Thompson** and **Ricky Santana** on June 23 in Portland in a match that Big Juice—**Jeff Warner**—called "one of the great moments of my career." But Warner is in a bit of a career quandary right now. He wants to defend the PNW belts with Beetlejuice, but he also has his former partner in **Maximum Overdrive**, **Tim Hunt**, begging him to return to the Pro Wrestling America (PWA) territory in Minnesota.

"I'm really a bit confused right now," said the powerful Big Juice. "I'm really enjoying things here in Portland, particularly since 'Juice and I became a team. But I spent a long time in Maximum Overdrive, and I'd love to start that unit up again. Who knows—maybe I can do both things at once."

The WWC stripped **Manny Fernandez** of the Puerto Rican title after the "Raging Bull" failed to defend the belt for several months . . . **Rick Rude** was forced out of action for several weeks with a torn tricep muscle . . . **Joey Maggs** and **Rex King** won the USWA tag team title from **Tom Burton** and **Tony Anthony** on June 23 in Memphis.

That's all for now. See you at the matches! □

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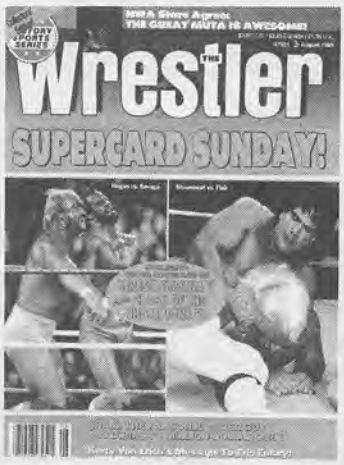

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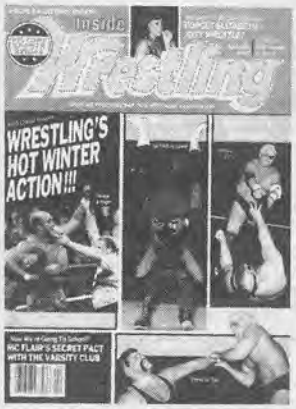

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A dynamic special section in the April 1989 issue of *Inside Wrestling* offered four pages of FULL-COLOR coverage of: The Survivor Series, SuperClash III, Battlestarr 88, and Clash of the Champions—Season's Beatings. Plus, an in-depth analysis places all these cards in historical perspective.

◄ SPECIAL ISSUE #3
The December 1989 issue of *Sports Review Wrestling* called it "Wrestling's Hottest Summer Ever!"—and indeed it was! In that issue, readers saw four pages of glorious FULL-COLOR coverage of the NWA's Great American Bash and the WWF's SummerSlam '89. A very special editorial section offered exclusive in-depth analysis of both events.

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NO HOLDS BARRED

(Continued from page 8)

sponsible about what they do," Hayes howls at a deafening decibel level.

Yeah, right. Hayes knows all about responsibility. For years, you knew that if anything slimy was going on in the sport, Hayes was responsible for it.

But I have a hunch that the days of the 'Birds are coming to a close. After all, The Freebirds as we once knew them are gone. The *real* 'Birds were Hayes, Buddy Roberts, and Terry Gordy, a rollicking band of no-gooders who took Texas wrestling by storm.

Their wars against the Von Erichs are legendary. They were hated wherever they went, and for good reason: Nobody had less class, decency, or respect for the rules than The Fabulous Freebirds.

But they finally went their separate ways, so we're left with Hayes, whose surname couldn't be more appropriate, and Garvin, a solid pro who has weakened himself by trying to convince the world that he is a *true* Freebird.

Maybe it's time that *this* version of The Freebirds went their separate ways, too.

***

Toni Adams, Chris Adams' wife, on Jeannie, Chris' ex-wife:

"She's sticking her nose where it doesn't belong, and it bothers me a lot. Listen, Chris and I have a great marriage, and just because Jeannie and Chris couldn't work things out doesn't mean she has to keep on trying to get involved.

"I don't hate Jeannie. She was in love, probably is still in love, with the man I love. It's just that she has a strange way of showing it. Well, to me, it's not competition over Chris, but it sure is bothersome."

Jeannie, Chris' ex-wife, on Toni

Jeannie, Chris Adams' ex-wife, gets into it with Adams' current wife, Toni. Jeannie accompanies Chris' foe Steve Austin to the ring.

Adams, Chris' wife:

"She thinks I'm trying to get him back? Well, that's the laugh of the year. What I'm trying to do is get back at Chris for all the garbage I had to put up with when we were together—and believe me, there was a lot of garbage, more than I care to reveal at this time.

"If you ask me, he's still in love with me, and she knows it. That's why she can't handle this. She sees me as a threat."

Both women make some sense.

Jeannie seems to have chosen an unusual route back into Chris' heart. Toni, naturally, wants to protect her marriage. She rightfully feels that she doesn't have to put up with outside marital interference.

I wouldn't mind seeing the USWA put an end to this feud. Get Toni and Jeannie away from the ring.

This is the kind of battle that needs to be settled in a court of law. □

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CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

(Continued from page 14)

was knocked out in a collision. Eventually, all four men were battling in the ring.

When Flair tried to punch II, the masked legend used a powerful kneelift to render Flair nearly unconscious. Luger pinned Flair as II made the three-count, giving the victory to Luger and JYD.

In other matches: Buddy Landell drew with Tracey Smothers . . . Paul Orndorff defeated Dutch Mantel . . . El Gigante beat Cuban Assassin by submission . . . Mark Callous beat Johnny Ace . . . Brian Pillman defeated Bam Bam Bigelow by disqualification . . . The Rock 'n' Roll Express beat The Midnight Express . . . Scott Steiner defeated Arn Anderson.

Hartford, CT ***(Correspondent—Keith Lagasse):*** In one of the most eagerly awaited matches of this WWF card, Ted DiBiase went up against his archrival, Big Bossman. As usual, Virgil accompanied DiBiase to ringside.

Bossman was in control for almost the entire encounter. Using an array of slams, kicks, and punches, Bossman was doing what he set out to do: dominate the "Million-Dollar Man." When DiBiase began to gain the advantage, Virgil repeatedly jumped up on the ring apron. Bossman got fed up with Virgil's interference and started chasing him around the ring.

When Bossman returned to the ring, DiBiase pounced on him and applied the sleeper, but Bossman broke out of it. DiBiase was about to slam his foe when Bossman rolled up the "Million-Dollar Man" in a small package for the pin.

In other bouts: Jim Powers pinned Pez Whatley . . . Hillbilly Jim pinned Steve Lombardi . . . Dino Bravo pinned Terry Taylor

DiBiase incapacitates Big Bossman, but Bossman has won most of their bouts.

. . . Brutus Beefcake defeated Lanny Poffo by submission . . . The Barbarian pinned Jimmy Snuka . . . The Bushwhackers beat The Honky Tonk Man & Greg Valentine by disqualification . . . The Ultimate Warrior pinned Curt Hennig.

Memphis, TN ***(Correspondent—Mark Mitchell):*** Kerry Von Erich was the special referee for a match between USWA champion Jerry Lawler and The Snowman. Lawler came to the ring accompanied by *three* managers: Ronald P. Gossett, Reggie B. Fine, and Downtown Bruno.

The managers tried to interfere frequently, but Von Erich held them off each time. While Kerry was arguing with Gossett and Fine, it looked like Snowman would beat Lawler. But Bruno tossed Lawler a lighter, which he used to ignite a fireball that he threw in Snowman's face.

Snowman screamed in pain and fell to the mat. Kerry returned to the action, saw Lawler pinning Snowman, and made the three-count that gave Lawler the win.

In other bouts: Brickhouse Brown defeated Ben Jordan . . . Tom Burton beat Billy Travis . . . Rex King defeated The Inhuman . . . Bill Dundee beat Tony Anthony . . . Kerry Von Erich defeated John Tatum . . . Jeff Jarrett beat Ronald Gossett in a barbed wire match.

Caguas, Puerto Rico ***(Correspondent—Manuel Cuarente):*** WWC Universal champion Carlos Colon squared off against Scott Hall in a bullrope match in the main event of a WWC card here.

Both men used the cowbell tied to the rope to open deep gashes on each other's foreheads. Though bleeding profusely, Colon was able to knock out Hall with the bell and drag him around the ring, touching all four corners to claim the victory.

In Puerto Rico, Scott Hall lost a bullrope match to Universal champion Carlos Colon.

In other bouts: Atkie Mulumba and Invader I were both counted out . . . TNT beat Miguel Perez Jr. . . . Invader IV & Hurricane Castillo Jr. beat The Mercenaries by disqualification . . . Leo Burke defeated Super Medic . . . Rick Valentine drew with Super Medic III. □

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April 1983/COLOR PINUP: Superstar Graham. **Mil Mascaras**, Valentine, Orndorff, Hart.

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July 1983/COLOR PINUP: Ivan Koloff. **Tommy Rich**, Patera, Von Erich, Snuka.

August 1983/COLOR PINUP: Larry Zbyszko. **Roddy Piper**, Sullivan, Zbyszko, Von Erich, Wrestling II.

November 1983/COLOR PINUP: Roddy Piper. **Harley Race**, Santana, Mascaras, Ellering, Valiant, Race.

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October 1984/COLOR PINUP: Billy Jack. **Kerry Von Erich**, Martel, Blanchard, Fabulous Blonds, Armstrong.

November 1984/COLOR PINUP: Rick Martel. **Sgt. Slaughter**, Von Erich, Road Warriors, Windham, Rotundo.

January 1985/COLOR PINUP: Tito Santana. **Road Warriors**, Billy Jack, Hayes, 1984 fan ballot.

February 1985/COLOR PINUP: Magnum T.A. **Rick Martel**, Hogan, Backlund, Ellering.

April 1985/COLOR PINUP: Ronnie Garvin, **Jimmy Snuka**, Warriors, Gordy, Flair, Rhodes.

June 1985/COLOR PINUP: Barry Windham. **Dusty Rhodes**, Slaughter, Hogan, Von Erich, T.A.

September 1985/COLOR PINUP: Junkyard Dog. **Magnum T.A**, Von Erich, Hogan, AWA scouting reports.

October 1985/COLOR PINUP: Chris Adams. **Rick Steamboat**, Warriors, Nikita, WWF scouting reports.

November 1985/COLOR PINUP: Randy Savage. **Ric Flair**, Slaughter, Steamboat, World Class scouting reports.

December 1985/COLOR PINUP: Jesse Ventura. **Great American Bash**, Von Erich, Orndorff, Williams & DiBiase.

January 1986/COLOR PINUP: Hacksaw Duggan. **Hulk Hogan**, T.A., Brody.

February 1986/COLOR PINUP: Nikita Koloff. **Mike Von Erich**, Warriors, Santana, Taylor, Barbarian, Race.

April 1986/COLOR PINUP: Ric Flair. **Wendi Richter**, Adams & Hernandez, Dusty & Warriors vs. Flair & Andersons.

May 1986/COLOR PINUP: Rick Steamboat. **Road Warriors**, Humongous, Bulldogs, Hansen vs. Martel.

June 1986/COLOR PINUP: Kevin Von Erich. **Hulk Hogan**, Adams, Duggan, Scott Hall.

July 1986/COLOR PINUP: King Kong Bundy. **R & R Express**, Hall and Hennig, Ventura, Warriors.

August 1986/COLOR PINUP: Dusty Rhodes. **Randy Savage**, Lugar vs. Race, Blanchard vs. Flair, Rude.

October 1986/COLOR PINUP: John Studd. **Nikita Koloff**, Savage vs. Bundy, Landell, Flair vs. Lugar, Simpson.

November 1986/COLOR PINUP: Baby Doll. **British Bulldogs**, Von Erich, Hansen, Gordy, Flair-Tully-Arn-Ole.

January 1987/COLOR PINUP: Fabulous Freebirds. **Roddy Piper**, Nikita vs. T.A., Snuka, Simpson.

February 1987/COLOR PINUP: Savage & Elizabeth. **UWF Tournament**, T.A., Baby Doll, Hogan vs. Orndorff.

April 1987/COLOR PINUP: Lex Luger. **Dusty & Nikita**, DiBiase, DeBeers, Dingo, WWF Housecleaning.

May 1987/COLOR PINUP: Steve Williams. **Andre-Hogan**, UWF Tourny, Albano, Cornette, Dynamite Kid, Kerry.

June 1987/COLOR PINUP: Hulk Hogan. **Magnum T.A.**, Can-Ams, Warriors, Freebirds, Hall.

July 1987/COLOR PINUP: Midnight Rockers. **Steamboat-Savage**, Luger, Duggan, Garvins, Sting.

August 1987/COLOR PINUP: Jim Garvin & Precious. **Hogan-Andre**, Warriors, Windham-Flair, Gordy, Bigelow.

October 1987/COLOR PINUP: Ted DiBiase. **Ric Flair**, Williams, Rockers, Hogan vs. Steamboat, NWA & WWF.

November 1987/COLOR PINUP: George Steele. **Nikita Koloff**, Warriors, Harts, Hogan, Windham.

January 1988/COLOR PINUP: The Road Warriors. **Ted DiBiase**, Flair-Garvins, Hogan & Ventura, Zbyszko.

February 1988/COLOR PINUP: Ronnie Garvin. **Randy Savage**, Garvin-Flair, Von Erichs, Freebirds.

April 1988/COLOR PINUP: Rick Martel. **Lex Luger**, Flair-Garvin, Kerry, Survivor Series, Iron Sheik.

May 1988/COLOR PINUP: Sting. **Andre**, Valentine-Beefcake, Flair, Cornette, Owen Hart.

June 1988/COLOR PINUP: Tully Blanchard. **Hulk Hogan**, Muraco, Perez, Rockers, Bunkhouse Stampede.

July 1988/COLOR PINUP: Curt Hennig. **Hogan vs. Andre**, Express vs. Rockers, Beefcake, Perez, Rotundo-Sting.

August 1988/COLOR PINUP: Al Perez. **Savage & Hogan**, Gilbert-Lawler, Four Horsemen, Kerry Von Erich.

October 1988/COLOR PINUP: Ultimate Warrior. **Sting**, Savage, Lawler, Williams, Steamboat, Varsity Club.

November 1988/COLOR PINUP: The Midnight Express. **Hogan**, Rhodes, Express, Powers of Pain.

December 1988/COLOR PINUP: Hacksaw Duggan. **Four Horsemen**, Brody, Bigelow, Garvin, Precious.

January 1989/COLOR PINUP: Barry Windham. **Hogan-Savage-Elizabeth**, Warriors, Sting.

February 1989/COLOR PINUP: Jake Roberts. **Luger**, Hogan-Savage, Kevin Von, Beefcake-Bass.

April 1989/COLOR PINUP: Rick Steiner. **Savage**, Dangerously, Muraco, Turner, Powers.

June 1989/COLOR PINUP: Rick Steamboat. **Hogan vs. Savage**, Warriors, Zbyszko, Rhodes.

July 1989/COLOR PINUP: Roddy Piper. **Steamboat**, Hogan, Paul E., Dream Tournament, Studd, Muraco.

August 1989/COLOR PINUP: Lex Luger. **Hogan**, Ultimate, Steamboat-Flair, Road Warriors, Rhodes.

October 1989/COLOR PINUP: Rick Rude. **Luger vs. Hogan**, Snuka, Sting, Lawler vs. Perez, Page.

November 1989/COLOR PINUP: Ric Flair. **Rhodes**, Steiner, Luger vs. Steamboat, Ultimate, Fuller-Jarrett.

December 1989/COLOR PINUP: Jimmy Snuka. **Luger, Vicious, Muta, Sting**, Beefcake & Hogan, Tully & Arn.

January 1990/COLOR PINUP: Sid Vicious. **Ultimate**, Cornette, Ross, Kerry.

February 1990/COLOR PINUP: Bret Hart. **Lex Luger**, Hogan, Hennig-Beefcake, Toni Adams, Woman.

April 1990/COLOR PINUP: Dusty Rhodes. **Ric Flair**, Hennig vs. Hogan, Sting, Rockers, Lawler.

May 1990/COLOR PINUP: The Great Muta. **Hulk Hogan**, Skyscrapers, R&R Express, Piper, Embry.

June 1990/COLOR PINUP: Sting. **Hogan vs. Warrior**, R&R Express, Rhodes vs. Savage, Arn vs. Sawyer.

July 1990/COLOR PINUP: Rick Martel. **Lex Luger**, Beefcake, Skyscrapers, Heenan, Saito, referees.

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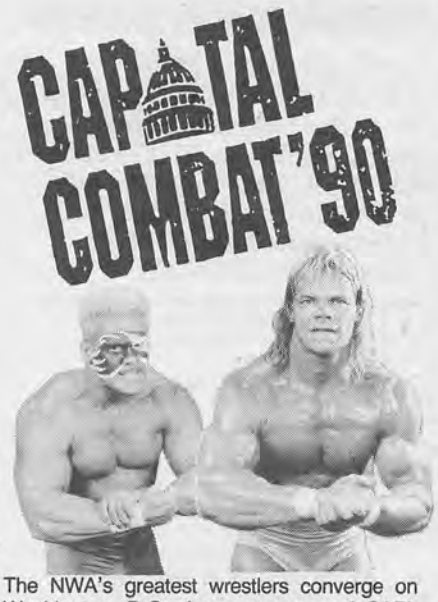

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YOU ASKED US

(Continued from page 16)

you can handle other big men like Stan Hansen, Mark Callous, Sid Vicious, and Big Van Vader?"—David Agosta, Panama City, FL

A: "I do not think it would be fair to compare myself to anyone else at this time," said Gigante through an interpreter. "I am just starting out in the wrestling game, while Andre is a 19-year veteran. He has accomplished many great things through the years. But right now, I just want to get my career started in the right way, and to do that, I will have to meet and defeat men like the ones you mentioned. With my size and my natural athletic ability, I have no doubt that I can beat any one of them. As I learned during my years as a basketball player, you must have confidence. And I plan to display that confidence to the world as I progress in my wrestling career."

***

Q: "My query is for WWC Universal champion Carlos Colon: Why don't you come to the United States and wrestle more often? In years past, you would come to the NWA to compete, but we've haven't seen you in a very long time. When will we see you again?"—Miguel Alicia, Atlanta

A: "I plan on competing in the U.S. again very soon," said Colon. "But right now, I feel that my first priority is to continue defending the Universal title for my people in Puerto Rico. I have had my hands full warding off the challenges of Scott Hall, TNT, and many other worthy contenders. My kind of defense schedule makes traveling almost impossible. Believe me, I would like nothing better than to wrestle for my fans in the United States once again. But until I can go back, all I can do is wish my fans there all the best."

***

Q: "This is for Steve Armstrong of The Southern Boys: What goals do you and Tracey Smothers have now that you are in the NWA? Will you soon wrestle The Midnight Express for the U.S. tag team title, or is the NWA World tag team championship your goal?"—Robert Simeck, Battle Creek, MI

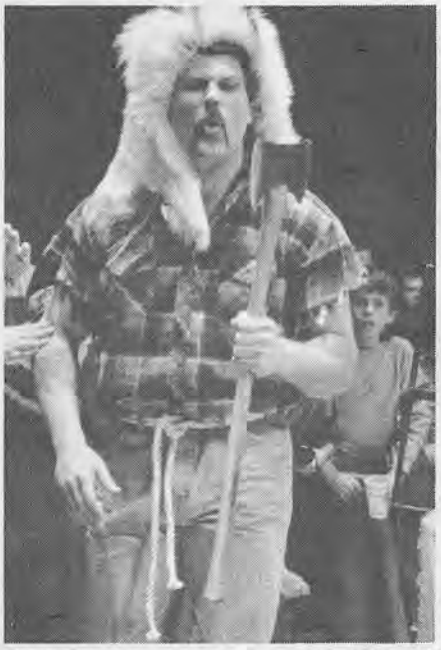
A: "Hey, we'll wrestle wherever the action is, Robert," responded

The Southern Boys—Steve Armstrong and Tracey Smothers—say they've set their sights on the U.S. tag team title, but their eventual goal is a world championship.

Armstrong. "We've been really successful so far—beyond our wildest dreams, as a matter of fact. We never thought we'd able to beat fine teams like The Samoans, The Freebirds, and The State Troopers so soon after making our debut in the NWA. But it's really a tossup as far as which set of belts to go after. We'd be more than happy to end up with the U.S. title, because beating a fine duo like Stan Lane and Bobby Eaton means that we'd be as good as any team in wrestling. But who knows? Maybe we're more ready for Doom than we know!"

***

Q: "My question is for 'Yukon' John Nord: Are you really happy with your new image? You act pretty crazy, stomping around the ring and howling the way you do."—Tim Redding, Minneapolis



"Yukon" John Nord once called himself Nord the Barbarian, but he's happy with his new, more popular image.

A: "I act crazy because I'm happy," said Nord, currently teaming with big Scott Norton. "I've found a new life in being a fan favorite. The cheers of the fans make me howl with happiness. I've never been more thrilled with life, especially since Scott and I have been doing so well as a unit. Destruction Crew, watch out!" □

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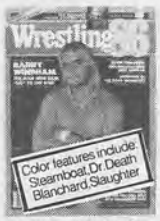

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INTRODUCING

(Continued from page 18)

I wanted to go to Tasmania, I just said 'When?' I didn't even know where the heck it was, but I was ready to hop on the plane that day."

Three weeks later, Devil flew to Tasmania, an Australian island 200 miles south of Melbourne. Greeting him at the airport was Baruck Marati, who had wrestled professionally throughout Asia under several different names for almost 30 years. But Devil says the man he encountered looked like anyone but an athlete.

"Marati is physically out of shape, but mentally there's no one sharper," Devil says. "He wanted to start my training the moment I stepped off the plane. I remember he said to me, 'You slept on the plane, didn't you? As far as I'm concerned, you've slept your whole life. Now it is time for you to wake up.' "

For nearly a year, Marati put Devil through an almost inhuman regimen, rarely giving him a day off for rest and allowing him very little contact with the outside world. "A slave driver?" Devil asks rhetorically. "Yeah, I guess you could call Marati that. But I was devoted to the man. He taught me moves and holds I'd never seen, stuff that was just incredible. I knew that if I listened to his advice, he would make me a star."

It was Marati who gave Devil his ring name. "He said, 'The Tasmanian devil is a cunning and vicious animal. That is what I am making you, cunning and vicious. You will carry the name proudly wherever you go.' "

Devil's next stop was Puerto Rico, where he made his pro debut on June 3, 1987, defeating Olympic I. He then returned to the U.S. and began his pro career. Marati, staying behind in Tasmania, became his manager *in absentia*.

Devil's leap off the top rope is his favorite finishing maneuver. Devil's trainer in Tasmania, Baruck Marati, still guides his career.

"I'd be foolish not to listen to him," Devil maintains. "He knows what's best for me, and I have faith in him."

With his high-flying maneuvers and his enthusiasm, Devil is becoming a popular competitor on the independent circuit, and has made a big impression in the NCW and ICW. Following Marati's advice, he is biding his time before he enters a major federation.

"In the meantime, I've got a good record and I'm getting better with each match," Devil says. "My flying leap off the top rope is already one of the most effective finishing maneuvers there is."

Attempts to reach Marati by telephone were futile, but Devil's first trainer, Rodz, has been watching Devil's progress closely. "Sending him to Marati was one of the best moves I've ever made," Rodz boasts. "Mark my words: The Tasmanian Devil is going to surprise a lot of folks before he's done." □

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February 1980/Rhodes-Funk, Race, Spoiler, Brisco.
May 1980/Koloff-Anderson, Brody-Spoiler, Graham, Andre.
October 1980/Hogan, Flair, Wrestling II, Super D.
January 1981/Morales-Fuji, Zbyszko, Thornton, Keirn.
June 1981/Morales-Khan, Lawler, Slater, Piper.
September 1981/Backlund-Mosca, Freebirds, Flair, Rich, Junkyard Dog.
November 1981/Rhodes-DiBiase, Steamboat, Mulligan, McDaniel, Spoiler.
December 1981/Muraco-Morales, Patera, Steele, Andre.
March 1982/Valentine, Brisco-Funk, Steele, Flair, Hayes.
April 1982/Spoiler, Idol-Hayes, Morales, Super D, Ladd.
May 1982/Rich-Flair, Backlund, Superstar, Dillon, Wrestling II.
June 1982/Tommy Rich, Jimmy Snuka, Wrestlers rate each other.
July 1982/Steamboat-Idol, Albano, Rhodes, Patera.
August 1982/Piper-Rich, Flair-Slater, Rhodes, Valentine, Bockwinkel.
October 1982/Funk-Abdullah, Orton, Kabuki, Von Erich.
November 1982/Piper, Abdullah, Saito, Von Erich, Mascaras.
December 1982/Backlund-Rose, Rhodes-Flair, Albano, Humperdink.
January 1983/Rich, McDaniel-Valentine, Patera, Brisco, Bockwinkel.
February 1983/Flair-Race, Morales-Rose, Patera, Bravo, Spoiler.
March 1983/Flair-Bass, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat, Patera.
April 1983/Backlund-Graham, Briscos, Rhodes, Hogan, Samoans.
May 1983/Muraco, Dillon, Sullivan, Reed, Brisco, Von Erich.
June 1983/Piper, Bockwinkel-Patterson, Brody, Sullivan, Baba.
July 1983/Valiant-Humperdink, Martel, Hernandez, Murdoch, Armstrong.
October 1983/Martel-Valentine, Mulligan, Lawler, Von Erichs, Bruno.
November 1983/Andre-Mulligan, Kamala-Brody, Slater, Backlund.
December 1983/Windham-LeDuc, Santana, Sullivan, Garvin.
January 1984/Andre-Abdullah, Bockwinkel, Gilbert, Windham, Flair, Mosca.
February 1984/Rich-Sawyer, Idol-Hansen, Martel, Parsons, Von Erich.
April 1984/Von Erich-Gordy, Dillon & Nagasaki, Graham, DiBiase, Orndorff.
May 1984/LeDuc-Sawyer, Assassins, The Men Who Make Wrestling Fly!
June 1984/Windham-Flair, Gilbert, Sawyer, Bockwinkel, Tsuruta.
July 1984/Flair-Gordy, Duggan, Blanchard, Brisco, AWA tag tourny.
August 1984/Rich & Gilbert, Adams-Hayes, Von Erich, Faces Of Wrestling.
September 1984/Flair-Steamboat, Freebirds-Von Erichs—Special coverage of two big cards.
October 1984/Sullivan-Rhodes, Freebirds video, Atlas, Orange Bowl card.
November 1984/Von Erich & Billy Jack, Andre, Fab Ones, Summer Wars!
December 1984/Rich-Gilbert, Martel, Mascaras, Youngblood, World Class.
January 1985/Flair-McDaniel, Missing Link, Backlund, Fabulous Ones, *Pro Wrestling USA*, Valentine.
February 1985/Sullivan-Graham, Hernandez & Nicola Roberts, Bruno Jr., Steamboat, Warriors.
March 1985/Starrcade '84 featuring Flair, Rhodes, Steamboat, Koloffs, 1985 Datebook, Hayes, wrestling school.
April 1985/Von Erich-Blackwell, Haynes-Barr, Hart, Irwins, 1984 in Pictures, Blair.
May 1985/Albano, Freebirds-Flair, Steamboat, Hernandez, Las Vegas.
June 1985/Pro Wrestling U.S.A, Von Erich, Richter, Windham, Taylor.
July 1985/Von Erich, WrestleMania, bloodiest matches, Backlund, Snuka.
August 1985/Flair-Nikita, Orndorff, Slaughter, Parade of Champions II.
September 1985/Adams-Von Erich, Orndorff, Sawyer, Kamala, Barr.
October 1985/Martel-Hayes, Richter, Savage, Adams, T.A., Warriors.
November 1985/Freebirds-Warriors, Mid-South, Haynes, Rhodes, Savage.
December 1985/Hogan, Zbyszko-Martel, Murdoch, Dillon, fiendish faces.
January 1986/Savage-Santana, Abdullah, Humongous, Von Raschke, Comiskey Park, Taylor.
February 1986/Junkyard Dog, Rude, Patrick, Garvin, Reed, Datebook.
April 1986/Savage-Hogan, Martel-Hansen, 1985 in Pictures, Warriors, DiBiase.
May 1986/Sammartino, R&R Express, Sunshine-Hyatt, Slater, Devastating Holds, Hall & Hennig.
June 1986/Hogan-Muraco, Midnight Express, Freebirds, Battle of Belts II.
July 1986/Orndorff-Piper, Blanchard-T.A., Matches of '80s, Sheepherders, Bockwinkel, Bulldogs.

AUGUST 1986

August 1986/Crockett Cup Tourny, Jake Roberts, Midnight Rockers, Von Erichs, Wrestling II.
September 1986/Bulldogs, Blanchard-Gibson, Lugar, Dundee, UWF tourny.
October 1986/Orndorff, Rude-Brody, Bash, Bockwinkel, Gordy, Adams.
November 1986/Andersons-R&R Express, Machine, Gordy, Managers.
December 1986/Machines, Fantastics, Warriors, WWF Muchnick Tourny.
January 1987/Russians, Hyatt-Dark Journey, WWF Top 50, Fab Ones.
February 1987/Road Warriors,Savage, Windham & Lugar, 1987 Datebook.
March 1987/Kamala-Hogan, Starrcade 86, Atlas, Williams, Tatum.
April 1987/1986 In Pictures, Kevin Von, Flair, Rich, Hennig-Bockwinkel.
May 1987/Nikita-Flair, Bulldogs, Albano's career, Snuka-DeBeers, Taylor.
June 1987/Hogan-Andre, Hall, Parsons, Garvin, WWF title history.
July 1987/Midnight Express, Savage-Steamboat, Adams, NWA in Boston.
August 1987/Nord-Kevin, Armstrong-Flair, Hogan & Patera, Crockett Cup.
September 1987/Hogan, Akbar, Luger-Nikita, Summer Feuds, charity shows.
October 1987/Windham, Bigelow, Bockwinkel, Western States tourny.
November 1987/Bash, Honky Tonk, Hart, Sheepherders, Condrey.
December 1987/Grappling Ghouls, Hogan-Andre, Luger-Nikita, Boesch card
January 1988/Honky Tonk, Garvin, T.A. career, Arcidi, Hogan.
February 1988/Rhodes, Strike Force, Rich-Adonis, Hyatt, 1988 datebook.
March 1988/Starrcade, Survivor Series, Simpson, Hennig, Zbyszko.
April 1988/1987 In Pictures, Tully & Arn, DiBiase, Kerry, Orton.
May 1988/Hawk-Flair, Andre-Hogan, Dangerously, Duggan, Mike George.
June 1988/Luger-Tully, DiBiase, Adams, NWA New York invasion.
July 1988/Savage wins WWF tourney, Rockers-Express, Hayes, Dusty-Rider.
August 1988/Luger and Sting win Crockett Cup, Savage-DiBiase, Nasty Boys, Ultimate Warrior.
September 1988/Predictions Through 1998, Williams, Rhodes, Bad Company, greatest Garden matches.
October 1988/Midnight Rockers, Sting, Taylor, Koloff, Hot Young Lions.
November 1988/R&R Express, Honky Tonk, Von Erichs, Great American Bash.
December 1988/Warriors, Samoan SWAT Team, Hart, Andre, Presidential Wrestlers.
January 1989/Jake-Cheryl-Rude, Sting, Lawler, Flair, Savage's career.
February 1989/The Champions in '89, Duggan, Roberts, 1989 datebook
April 1989/Starrcade '88, Savage-Hogan, Funk-Mulligan, Heenan, Abdullah.
May 1989/Royal Rumble, WrestleMania, Rhodes, Lawler, Horsemen.
June 1989/Chi-Town Rumble, Hogan-Towers, R&R Express, Rougeaus.
July 1989/WrestleMania V, Sting, Steamboat, Martel vs. Rude, Embry.
August 1989/Luger & Sting, Ultimate, Flair's personal photos, Bulldogs.
September 1989/Duggan, Wrestle War, Rhodes, Flair-Steamboat, Japan.
October 1989/Great American Bash, Piper-Ventura, Savage-Hogan.
November 1989/Hogan's toughest matches, Snuka, Sting, Skyscrapers.
January 1990/Savage, Woman-Steiner, Vicious, fattest wrestlers.
February 1990/Piper, Kerry, Muta & Luger vs. Flair, Datebook.
April 1990/Starrcade '89, Roberts, Williams, Diamond, Five to watch.
May 1990/Hogan, Royal Rumble, Piper, Zbyszko-Sammartino, Nord.
June 1990/Hogan vs. Warrior, Wrestle War '90, Saito, Andre, Paul E.
July 1990/WrestleMania VI, Cornette, Sullivan vs. Norman, Ole.
August 1990/Ultimate Warrior, Blanchard, Windham, NWA returns to NY.
September 1990/Legion of Doom, Luger, Haynes, Gossett, wrestling's far side.

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TOMMY RICH

(Continued from page 33)

In recent bouts against Samu (above), Fatu (below), and Cuban Assassin (bottom right), Rich has demonstrated that he still has the skills to be a winner, as he was against Harley Race in 1981 (right).

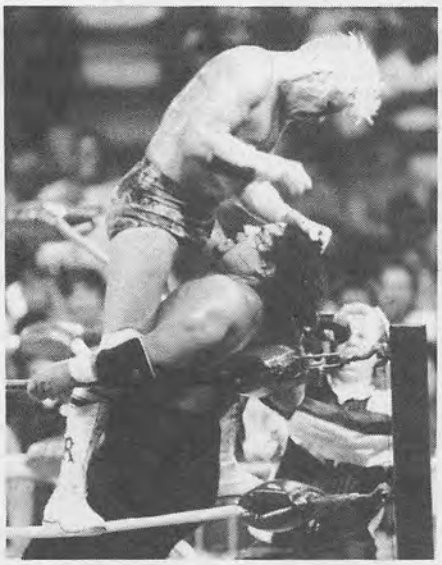
gone. Decisive victories over Super Destroyer have shown that Rich still has the ability to beat top competition.

But Rich struggled in his Clash of the Champions XI match against Bam Bam Bigelow before Bigelow was finally disqualified at the 3:46 mark for trying to choke Rich. That match proved that Rich's comeback is still in the developmental stages.

"If that's a champion, then I'm the Six-Million-Dollar Man," Bigelow said. "Rich is deceiving himself. He got lucky nine years ago, and now he thinks he can get it back. Well, what happened in 1981 was a fluke. What's happened since then is the *real* Rich."

That Bigelow's point of view may be the reality of the situation is not out of the question. Rich has rarely flashed his championship form of '81. He has never come close to regaining the NWA World title. He even admits his own self-doubts.

"Listen, I know what I've done in the past, and I know what I can do in the future," Rich said. "But it's been a long time since '81. Yeah, I've learned a lot, but it's gonna take quite a bit of impressing before I'm even offered a title shot. The fact that I'm an ex-champion used to carry some weight, but not anymore. Now they treat me like everybody else.



"And people keep asking me if my comeback is for real," Rich continued. "Well, there's only one way for me to answer that: I'm trying for real, I'm in shape for real, and I won't give up until it's obvious *to me* that I'm never gonna get that title back.

"Yeah, maybe I did achieve too

much too soon, but at least I was NWA World champion once. Not too many people can say that. Hey, Bigelow sure can't."

Rich has every right to be proud of his past accomplishments, but he's done very little since then. He has changed philosophies from fan favorite to rulebreaker to fan favorite and back again . . . and again . . . and again.

He tries every formula. He is a fine scientific wrestler, but his skills have dulled. He can brawl, but he is not overpowering. He was once the most popular wrestler in the sport; now he is often wrestling in opening matches.

"The thing about Rich is that he has to forget the past," said Lex Luger. "If he's going to get anywhere, it's going to be on what he can do *now*. He's trying to relive what he once did, and that's fine as a motivating factor, but he has to be able to back it up once he steps through those ropes. And he has to remain focused. In my mind, focus is the key."

Admittedly, Rich is still a long way from being granted a shot at the NWA World title. According to NWA insiders, Rich hasn't even come up for consideration.

"He'll have to do something very, very impressive to earn that title shot," one insider said. "Right now, the brass is very hesitant to give Rich too much too soon."

"Too much too soon" has certainly been the story of Rich's life. He has always had to live with the success of his past. That success has been a weight on his shoulders, a source of simultaneous pride and shame.

But if he can at least make a serious run at the NWA belt, he'll silence all the doubters. He'll also silence the doubts within himself.

Tommy Rich has shown what he can do. Now he must show that he can still do it. □

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SUMMER 1989/Stories include: Steamboat, Hogan, Rotundo-Steiner, Warriors, Duggan, Turner, Taylor.

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FEBRUARY 1990/Stories include: Piper-Savage, Hogan, Rhodes, Embry, Kerry, Luger.

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ULTIMATE WARRIOR

(Continued from page 35)

He's just another part of the circus.

Savage is walking around calling himself the "King" of the WWF, and his "Queen," Sensational Sherri, isn't sensational at all. She's just excess baggage. And Dusty Rhodes? That's Savage's opponent, almost every night, in meaningless grudge matches.

You don't want to go back to meaningless grudge matches again, do you, Warrior? You want to stay as you are: the *real* king of the WWF.

That's what you are. Nobody talks about it much, but your recent streak of pinfall victories has been—and continues to be—absolutely fabulous. It's a miracle! You may be the most dominant WWF champion ever!

Destruction every night, *that's* your itinerary. And it just keeps getting better and better.

When does it stop?

I guess the word we need to discuss, Warrior, is burnout. It happens to the best of them. It happened to Hogan. It definitely happened to Savage; the "Macho Man/King" certainly isn't the same wrestler he once was. The Savage of 1990 wouldn't stand a chance against the Savage of 1988.

For the past six years, you've gone all-out to reach the top. Now that you're there, you're *still* going all-out. Your body hasn't had time to rest. You're still a hyperactive bundle of energy. When does it all stop?

Does it stop when somebody *makes* you stop? When will you hit the "wall," that imaginary point of no return that marathon runners often talk about?

When will your body say, "I've

Warrior's victory over Hulk Hogan at WrestleMania VI (top left) began an intense title reign that began with the Rude feud (above). If Warrior doesn't pace himself, he may end up like Randy Savage (below), a World champion who's now a burned-out shell of his former self.

had enough!" Savage's body said it, and look where he is now: He's barely a contender for any WWF title.

Don't let it happen. Look at Ric Flair. His 10-year streak of glory had a few interruptions, but those breaks allowed him to refuel, to take stock of himself, and to come back stronger than before. Flair was NWA World champion so many times and for so long only because he knew that he couldn't go all-out all the time in every match.

Flair would mix a pinfall win with an interference loss. He'd take on an occasional easy opponent. He'd throw in a non-title match or a tag team match with his Horsemen friends. Then he'd turn it up a few notches for the really significant battles.

Longevity, the true goal of every wrestler, isn't so hard to achieve. But you have to plan a pace for yourself and stick to it.

Why should you listen to us? Well, we know. We've been covering this sport for over three decades. We've seen promising young stars and great new champions disappear in no time at all. It's sad at first. But, after a little while, they're forgotten.

You, Ultimate Warrior, are not the kind of wrestler that should be forgotten. You're something special, and you have the chance to become one of the greatest WWF World champions ever.

Think. Pace yourself. Look to the future. Don't always wrestle for the moment. Try like heck to protect your title, but also realize that peak performance every night isn't necessary; you must allow yourself an occasional breather match.

If you keep up your current pace, you'll burn out. That's a fact. You'll be an ex-champion faster than Andre the Giant fell beneath the might of your awesome clotheslines.

Don't say we didn't warn you. □

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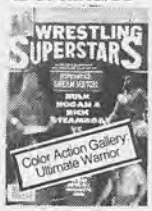

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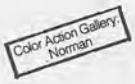

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RIC FLAIR

(Continued from page 37)

Even when Lex Luger gets Flair in a cage, he hasn't been able to beat him. That's because the Horsemen always find a way to save Flair's hide.

Horsemen—has turned this once-great champion into an embarrassment both to himself and the NWA.

I can't remember the last time I saw a Flair match in which Ole Anderson, Arn Anderson, Barry Windham, Sid Vicious, or Woman *didn't* interfere.

I can't remember the last time Flair successfully executed one of his potent finishing maneuvers, or made an opponent scream out in submission from the force of the figure-four leglock.

I can't remember the last time Flair strutted around the ring with the arrogance of true greatness; now he has the attitude of a man who knows he's getting away with murder. But Flair has a long way yet to fall. Crime, as we all know, does not pay.

Flair, however, has paid the greatest price for his crimes: His self-respect is gone. The respect others had for him no longer exists. I know. I once respected Flair as much as, if not more than, any other man in the sport. Sure, I realized that he had his bad points. Everybody does. But Flair was a great wrestler and nobody could deny that.

Is he washed up? That's a possibility I've considered. But then, every once in a while, I see signs of his old brilliance. I see the man who could bring a crowd to its feet in excitement. I see the man who rewrote the book on wrestling.

He's still there. Somewhere. Of course, we can't see him because he's constantly surrounded by those friends he calls The Four Horsemen. They have sapped him of his greatness. They are no friends at all.

Was Flair ever better than he was last summer, when the Horsemen weren't at his side and he was able to wrestle on the side of good? He had brilliant matches against Terry Funk. And his matches last spring against Rick Steamboat were among the greatest the sport has *ever* seen.

The great Flair is still there. And there are ways for him to come back.

Naturally, it's in my best interests for Flair to be the way he is: dependent, lazy, and an easy target. But I'm not thinking of *my* best interests; I'm thinking about the best interests of the *sport* of wrestling, and how Flair has (almost) always made it better.

His first step is obvious: He must rid himself of the Horsemen. At the very least, he must ensure that they are *never* at ringside for his matches. Flair must erase any idea that he is dependent upon others. He must let us all know that he can still make it on his own.

As long as the Horsemen are at ringside, there will be interference. Even in Flair's Capital Combat cage match against Lex Luger, with a top to the ring and, seemingly, no way for the Horsemen to interfere, they found a way.

Flair retained his title, but Luger was the real winner in that match.

Should Flair reembrace the fans? That's not necessary. But Flair *must* reembrace himself. He must go into the ring and again display his incredible skills. Only through his own actions can Flair let everyone know that the greatness that once flourished within him still lives.

The figure-four leglock is a lethal maneuver. Used by Flair, in recent

In February, Ole Anderson kicked Sting out of the Horsemen (above); that's when Sting realized what a mistake he'd made by joining them. Now Sting has JYD as an ally in his war against the evil foursome (below).

Flair can become a great champion again, Sting says, if he hits the gym and starts wrestling for himself.

months, it has become a joke. Flair's lack of dedication is the cause of this. In fact, lack of dedication is the reason his entire repertoire has become so weak. Flair knows he can rely on the Horsemen; why should he waste his time in the gym? Why should he train and make sure he stays in peak condition?

Well, there's only one answer to those questions: Flair should do it out of self-respect. He must return to the gym and rekindle his former dedication to excellence.

Maybe Flair is burnt out. Maybe he's had enough of the tireless training. After all, he's been doing it for so long.

If that's the case, Flair can regain his greatness by leaving the sport behind. His legacy can still be saved. Many of us still remember the great Flair, the unbeatable Flair, the Flair who set the pace for champions throughout the entire sport.

But those memories are fading fast. And Flair has nobody to blame but himself. □

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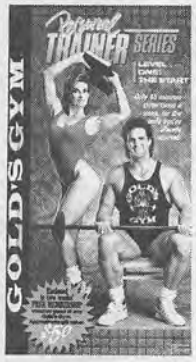

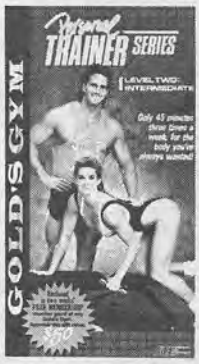

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(1) WWF World champion

2 RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN
(2) NWA World champion

3 LEX LUGER
268, Chicago, IL
(3) U.S. heavyweight champion

4 CURT HENNIG
235, Minneapolis, MN
(5) WWF Intercontinental champion

5 RICK RUDE
246, Robbinsdale, MN
(4) No. 2 contender: WWF title

6 KERRY VON ERICH
260, Denton, TX
(-) USWA Texas champion

7 LARRY ZBYSZKO
248, Pittsburgh, PA
(7) AWA World champion

8 ARN ANDERSON
249, Minneapolis, MN
(-) NWA TV champion

9 SCOTTY THE BODY
235, Short Hills, NJ
(-) PNW champion

10 JERRY LAWLER
234, Memphis, TN
(6) No. 2 contender: USWA title

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4 THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS
Combined weight: 458 pounds
(4) U.S. tag team champions

5 THE HART FOUNDATION
Combined weight: 515 pounds
(5) No. 1 contenders: WWF tag team title

6 RICK & SCOTT STEINER
Combined weight: 483 pounds
(3) No. 2 contenders: NWA tag title

7 THE ROCKERS
Combined weight: 450 pounds
(8) No. 2 contenders: WWF tag team title

8 TRACEY SMOTHERS & STEVE ARMSTRONG
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NWA

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(1) 268, Chicago, IL

2—STING
(-) 260, Venice Beach, CA

3—MARK CALLOUS
(4) 320, Dallas, TX

4—ARN ANDERSON
(-) 249, Minneapolis, MN

5—JUNKYARD DOG
(2) 305, Charlotte, NC

6—PAUL ORNDORFF
(-) 253, Brandon, FL

7—TOMMY RICH
(-) 248, Hendersonville, TN

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(3) 260, Denton, TX

2—JERRY LAWLER
(C) 234, Memphis, TN

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(2) 214, Melbourne, Australia

4—JOHN TATUM
(5) 236, Hollywood, CA

5—STEVE AUSTIN
(-) 241, Dallas, TX

6—CHRIS ADAMS
(7) 228, Stratford, England

7—JEFF JARRETT
(4) 200, Hendersonville, TN

8—GARY YOUNG
(-) 240, houston, TX

9—KEVIN VON ERICH
(8) 235, Denton, TX

10—MATT BORNE
(1) 235, Portland, OR

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue, while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

MOST POPULAR

1 HULK HOGAN
302, Venice Beach, CA
Last issue: No. 2 Most Popular

2 STING
260, Venice Beach, CA
Last issue: No. 4 Most Popular

3 THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR
280, Queens, NY
Last issue: No. 1 Most Popular

4 LEX LUGER
268, Chicago, IL
Last issue: No. 3 Most Popular

5 TUGBOAT
407, Pittsburgh, PA
Last issue: No. 8 Most Popular

6 DUSTY RHODES
302, Austin, TX
Last issue: No. 5 Most Popular

7 BIG BOSSMAN
348, Cobb County, GA
Last issue: No. 6 Most Popular

8 KERRY VON ERICH
260, Denton, TX
Last issue: No. 10 Most Popular

9 PAUL ORNDORFF
253, Brandon, FL
Last issue: unrated

10 SCOTTY THE BODY
235, Short Hills, NJ
Last issue: No. 9 Most Popular

MOST HATED

1 EARTHQUAKE
462, Montreal, Quebec
Last issue: No. 4 Most Hated

2 RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN
Last issue: No. 1 Most Hated

3 CURT HENNIG
235, Minneapolis, MN
Last issue: No. 2 Most Hated

4 BARRY WINDHAM
263, Sweetwater, TX
Last issue: No. 3 Most Hated

5 RICK RUDE
246, Robbinsdale, MN
Last issue: No. 5 Most Hated

6 LARRY ZBYSZKO
248, Pittsburgh, PA
Last issue: No. 8 Most Hated

7 BILLY JACK HAYNES
245, Portland, OR
Last issue: No. 9 Most Hated

8 ARN ANDERSON
249, Minneapolis, MN
Last issue: unrated

9 RICK MARTEL
236, Quebec City, Quebec
Last issue: No. 7 Most Hated

10 STEVE AUSTIN
241, Dallas, TX
Last issue: unrated

For period ended June 29, 1990

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of those issues—in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only—and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a number-one rating, nine for a number-two ranking, and so on down to one point for a number-10 rating. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, allowing a maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

1—RIC FLAIR ..... 95 points
2—ULTIMATE WARRIOR ..... 84 points
3—LEX LUGER ..... 74 points
4—HULK HOGAN ..... 73 points
5—JERRY LAWLER ..... 38 points

TAG TEAMS

1—DEMOLITION ..... 84 points
2—RICK & SCOTT STEINER ..... 72 points
3—THE ROAD WARRIORS ..... 66 points
4—DOOM ..... 43 points
5—MIDNIGHT EXPRESS ..... 42 points

PNW

PNW Champion:
SCOTTY THE BODY
(2) 235, Short Hills, NJ

1—THE GRAPPLER
(5) 280, parts unknown

2—BILLY JACK HAYNES
(1) 245, Portland, OR

3—LARRY OLIVER
(8) 235, Tampa, FL

4—RIP OLIVER
(3) 245, Tampa, FL

5—STEVE DOLL
(-) 237, Dallas, TX

6—AL MADRIL
(6) 231, Los Angeles, CA

7—RICKY SANTANA
(-) 235, Orlando, FL

8—THE EQUALIZER
(9) 250, parts unknown

9—SCOTT NORTON
(7) 360, Minneapolis, MN

10—MOONDOG MORETTI
(-) 245, Los Angeles, CA

ICW

ICW Champion:
TONY ATLAS
(C) 247, Roanoke, VA

1—SHEIK ALFIDE
(-) 230, Saudi Arabia

2—THE ROADBLOCK
(1) 392, Rochester, NY

3—CHIEF THUNDER MOUNTAIN
(-) 395, Okmulgee, OK

4—ERIC SBRACCHIA
(4) 240, Boston, MA

5—VIC STEAMBOAT
(2) 235, Honolulu, HI

6—JOE SAVOLDI
(3) 220, Parsippany, NJ

7—RAY ODYSSEY
(9) 205, Palm Beach, FL

8—HOSS
(-) 420, Waco, TX

9—MIKE KALUHA
(5) 239, Honolulu, HI

10—JOSE LUIS RIVERA
(-) 240, San Juan, PR

GEORGIA: **Georgia All-Star champion**—Nick Busick; **1**—Joel Deaton; **2**—Shotgun Gauge; **3**—Steve Lawler; **4**—Dino Minelli; **5**—Big Daddy; **6**—Mike Golden; **7**—Abdullah the Butcher; **8**—Ranger Ross; **9**—Billy Black; **10**—John Michaels.

LPWA: **LPWA champion**—Susan Sexton; **1**—Black Venus; **2**—The Beast; **3**—Bambi; **4**—Bad Girl; **5**—Reggie Bennett; **6**—Shelly Francis; **7**—Misty Blue Simmes; **8**—Lelani Kai; **9**—Heidi Lee Morgan; **10**—Judy Martin.

NAWA: **NAWA champion**—title vacant; **1**—Rick Steamboat; **2**—Matt Borne; **3**—Robert Fuller; **4**—War Eagle; **5**—Ranger Ross; **6**—Vince Torelli; **7**—Bob Orton; **8**—Dean Malenko; **9**—Curtis Thompson; **10**—Randy Culley.

PWA: **PWA champion**—Ricky Rice; **1**--Charlie Norris; **2**—Larry Cameron; **3**—Sheik Adnan Al-Kaissie; **4**—Ken Patera; **5**—Tim Hunt; **6**—Teijho Khan; **7**—Tommy Ferrara; **8**—Jerry Lynn; **9**—Jeff Warner; **10**—The Professor.

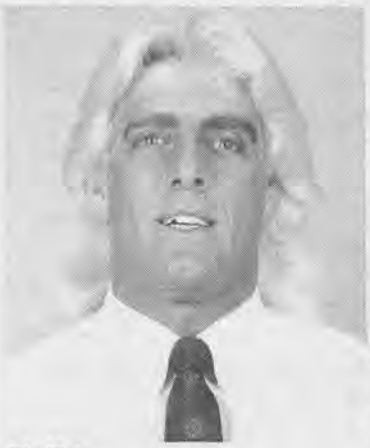
PWF: **PWF champion**—Steve Keirn; **1**—Robert Fuller; **2**—Ron Slinker; **3**—Jim Backlund; **4**—Lou Perez; **5**—Mike Awesome; **6**—Terminator; **7**—Mike Graham; **8**—Sgt. Rock; **9**—Powerhouse Parker; **10**—Dennis Knight.

WWC: **WWC champion**—Carlos Colon; **1**—TNT; **2**—Atkie Mulumba; **3**—Scott Hall; **4**—Invader I; **5**—Abdullah the Butcher; **6**—Leo Burke; **7**—Mongolian Mauler; **8**—Rick Valentine; **9**—Dragon Master; **10**—Miguel Perez Jr.

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating over 200 wrestlers in 18 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

The shame of a champion: In the wake of **Ric Flair's** victory over **Lex Luger** at "Capital Combat '90," "Ratings Analysis" was deluged with hundreds of letters protesting Flair's continued possession of the number-one position in our Top 10 ratings, a spot the "Nature Boy" held in our July and August issues (last month, Flair dropped to number two). A sampling:



Ric Flair

After watching "Capital Combat '90," I am disgusted with Ric Flair, writes Phil Ewen of Newburgh, New York. *This is your idea of the number-one wrestler in the sport?*

Even in a steel cage, Flair was saved by ***The Four Horsemen.*** *His title reign is a farce, and I am tired of watching the NWA. I am convinced that Flair owns the NWA—and probably your magazines.*

Why doesn't the NWA do something about all the interference during his title matches? Why do they allow the Horsemen to storm the ring and attack his opponent—even in a cage? And how can your magazine promote him as the best? You seem to completely ignore the fact that he doesn't win on his own. You hype his ability and ignore the blatant cheating. Why?

Ric Flair is always rated number one or two, writes Mrs. Michael Lesnick of Goshen, New York, *yet all his victories I've seen are the result of cheating, technicalities, or his opponent being ganged-up on. Yet you are always rating him on top and constantly harping how great of a wrestler he is.*

How can you constantly call Ric Flair a great champion and rate him number one while completely ignoring the way he wins? I have to constantly explain to my kids that being a champion like Flair is wrong and immoral, as one of them loves Flair and cheers when the Horsemen gang up on a helpless Flair opponent.

I feel it is your obligation to analyze your ratings and penalize wrestlers who achieve victories and titles the way Flair does.

As the explanation atop the right-hand page of our ratings explains, the Top 10 singles ratings "are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler."

Based on those criteria, Flair continues to excel. Compared with **The Ultimate Warrior**, whom most fans would place in the number-one position, Flair excels as well:

● ***Won-lost records.*** However much you hate the way Flair courts the Horsemen's interference on his behalf (and Flair's position as the number-one Most Hated wrestler since our June 1990 issue indicates that most of you do), the fact remains that, for the most part, he does have a winning record. Over the past two months, however, that was not the case: Flair lost 75 percent of his matches by disqualification. This, along with his frequent appearance in tag team matches, was why Flair was dropped to number two last issue. Warrior, meanwhile, has accumulated a stunning series of pinfall victories. *Category edge: Warrior.*

The Ultimate Warrior

● ***Quality of opposition.*** Again, we refer to the list of challengers of the past two months (and remember, "quality of opposition" takes into account strictly opponents and their skills, not wins or losses against those opponents). Flair: **Brian Pillman**, **Lex Luger**, **Road Warrior Hawk**, **Junkyard Dog**, and **Rick Steiner**. Warrior: **Curt Hennig**, **Rick Rude**, **Bobby Heenan** & **Haku**, and **Dino Bravo**. *Category edge: Flair.*

● ***Inherent skill of each wrestler.*** In our sister publication *Wrestling 90* we have a feature called "Scouting Report," in which we grade a wrestler in five categories and provide an overall grade. A recap of those grades will give you a pretty good idea of our view on the inherent skills (not necessarily how they use those skills, mind you) on Flair and Warrior. Flair: speed—B+; strength—B+; technical knowledge—A+; physical condition—A+; ring intelligence—A+; overall grade—A+. Warrior: speed—B-; strength—A+; technical knowledge—C-; physical condition—A-; ring intelligence—B-; overall grade—B. *Category edge: Flair.*

Of course, intangibles can enter into the ratings equation. For example: How much weight should be given to each of these three categories? If it's equal, then Flair should be number-one again this issue (he's not; he's number two). Or: On won-lost records, what about the *way* a wrestler wins or loses? (Flair loses out big-time here.)

The address for mail: We're anxious to hear your response to this edition of "Ratings Analysis," as well as your comments on anything related to our ratings. Address your mail to: *The Wrestler,* Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571. □

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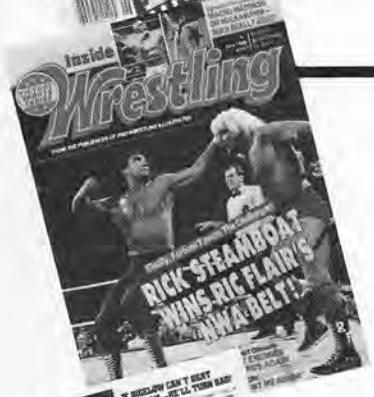

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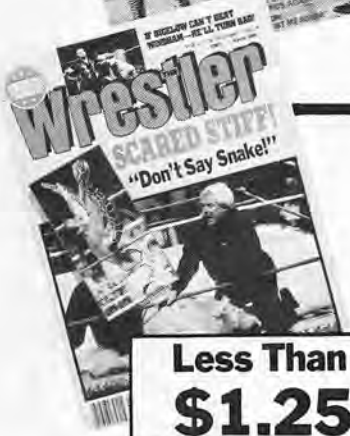

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